Happy Ayudha Pooja
On the occasion of Ayudha Pooja, our office will remain closed on 1 October, 2025. Hence, there will be no edition of the Salar Digital English Daily dated 2 October, 2025.

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SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

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UK: Gandhi statue vandalised due to racial aggravation

LONDON, 30 SEPT

Britain's Metropolitan Police said on Tuesday that it has begun its investigation into the criminal damage caused to Mahatma Gandhi's statue at Tavistock Square in London, a crime which the force is treating as "racially aggravated". The police said it was called to the iconic statue on Sunday evening as reports emerged of the plinth being defaced with disturbing graffiti, condemned by the High Commission of India in London as a "violent attack". "We have begun an investigation into reports of criminal damage to a Mahatma Gandhi statue at Tavistock Square Gardens in Camden," a Metropolitan Police statement said. *—PTI*

MHA seeks FCRA renewal 4 months before expiry

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The Union Home Ministry (MHA) has issued a strict directive for all Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) receiving foreign funding to submit their applications for the renewal of Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) registration at least four months before the expiry of their certificate. This measure aims to ensure timely processing and prevent disruptions to the operations of NGOs reliant on foreign contributions. Under Section 16(1) of the FCRA 2010, organisations must apply for renewal within six months of expiry, and the government ordinarily renews the certificate within 90 days of receiving the application. However, the MHA observed that many NGOs submit renewal applications with less than 90 days remaining. Such delays hinder thorough scrutiny and the collection of essential security clearance inputs before the current certificate lapses. *—PTI*

47L voters deleted from Bihar as EC releases final SIR list

21.53L voters added; 1.63L in Patna alone

PATNA/NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The Election Commission on Tuesday published the final electoral roll for Bihar, listing 7.42 crore voters, a drop of nearly 47 lakh from the pre-Special Intensive Revision (SIR) figure of 7.89 crore recorded in June.

This revised figure, however, marks a net increase of 17.87 lakh from the draft roll of 7.24 crore released on 1 August, which had seen 65 lakh names removed on grounds such as death, migration, or duplication.

According to the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Bihar, 21.53 lakh eligible voters were added after the draft roll's publication, while 3.66 lakh names were removed during the claims and objections phase.

The EC did not disclose the specific grounds on which the deleted names were found "ineligible" (ayogya) by the time of final roll publication.

The final tally may still change slightly once supplementary lists are issued during the election process.

In Patna district alone, the total number of voters across 14 assembly segments stood at 48.15 lakh, up 1.63 lakh from 1 August. Of these, 22.75 lakh are women, and the Digha constituency recorded the highest number of electors at 4.56 lakh.

The central poll body released the final voter list for Bihar on Tuesday after a three-long SIR exercise *PHOTO: PTI*

The EC is set to visit Patna on 4–5 October to review poll preparations. The term of the current 243-member Bihar Assembly ends on November 22, with elections expected to be announced soon.

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar thanked voters, officials, and political parties for completing the SIR, the first such exercise in 22 years.

However, the process remains contentious. Opposition parties, including the Congress, raised concerns over the high number of deletions. Bihar Congress president Rajesh Kumar alleged that the EC's impartiality was "doubtful" and warned of a "fight to the finish".

Several opposition parties have also moved the Supreme Court, claiming the SIR disproportionately targets voters unlikely to support the ruling BJP-led NDA. *—PTI*

'TRUTH WILL COME OUT'

Target me, not cadre: Vijay accuses TN CM of 'revenge'

CHENNAI, 30 SEPT

Actor and TVK Chief Vijay, in his first public statement since the Karur stampede that claimed 41 lives, defended his absence from the site, stating that visiting would have created an "unusual situation."

In a sombre video message, Vijay, dressed in grey, said, "I didn't visit Karur as it would lead to an unusual situation. I will meet the victims' families soon." He expressed deep anguish, calling it the most painful moment of his life.

Vijay indirectly accused the ruling DMK and Chief Minister MK Stalin of political vendetta, saying, "CM sir, if you want revenge, do anything to me. Don't touch my leaders. I will be at home or in office."

He questioned why the tragedy occurred in Karur after campaigning peacefully in five other districts, stating, "People know the truth and are watching."

Vijay denied any wrongdoing and vowed to continue his political journey. He said he left Karur early on the day of the rally for public safety.

TVK leaders, including Bussy N Anand and C R Nirmal Kumar, face police action over the incident. FIRs filed under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita accuse Vijay of deliberately arriving late, causing overcrowding and panic.

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) chief and actor Vijay delivers a video message, Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025. *PHOTO: PTI*

> **I didn't visit Karur as it would lead to an unusual situation. I will meet you (families of victims, the injured) soon... You (Stalin) may do anything to me, but don't touch my party people**
>
> -Vijay, TVK Chief

However, Vijay is not named in the FIR. "We did nothing wrong, but FIRs are being filed against our leaders and even social media users," Vijay said, adding that his heart aches for the victims and their families "I hope everyone recovers soon," he concluded. *—PTI*

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TVK leader booked over Genz post

TVK General Secretary Aadhav Arjuna has been charged over a controversial post urging Tamil Nadu's "Gen Z" to emulate protests in Sri Lanka and Nepal against a "wicked government." The remarks, posted on X less than 48 hours after a Karur rally stampede killed 41, drew sharp criticism from the DMK. Though later deleted, the post was branded "irresponsible" by DMK MP Kanimozhi. TVK distanced itself, calling the views personal. Arjuna has petitioned the Madras High Court seeking a CBI probe. *—Agencies*

FESTIVE CHEER

Women draw rangolis and decorate office rooms on the eve of Ayudha pooja in Vidhana Soudha on Tuesday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

B'luru to get 368 wards as govt publishes notification

BENGALURU, 30 SEP

The Karnataka government on Tuesday released a draft ward delimitation report for the Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA), proposing 368 wards under the five newly constituted municipal corporations.

According to the Urban Development Department, the delimitation was carried out under the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act, 2024, based on the 2011 Census, following the submission of a report by the Ward Delimitation Commission on September 30.

The department said the proposed distribution of wards is: Bengaluru Central (63), Bengaluru South (72), Bengaluru East (50), Bengaluru West (111) and Bengaluru North (72).

The commission, chaired by GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao, was constituted after the government created the five corporations.

The government has invited the public to submit objections or suggestions in writing, with reasons, to the Additional Chief Secretary, Urban Development Department, by 5 pm on October 15 at Vikas Soudha, Bengaluru.

Objections and suggestions received within the stipulated time will be examined before finalising the ward-wise delimitation, the department added. *—PTI*

Monsoon claimed 1,528 lives as India recorded 8% surplus rainfall: IMD

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Extreme weather events during the June–September monsoon season claimed at least 1,528 lives across India, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Maharashtra were among the worst-hit states, with fatalities largely linked to floods, heavy rains, and lightning strikes. Madhya Pradesh recorded the highest toll at

290, while Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir reported over 140 deaths each, mainly due to flash floods and landslides. Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand saw a high proportion of deaths from lightning, highlighting sharp regional variations in weather hazards. India as a whole received 937.2 mm of rainfall against a normal of 868.6 mm, marking a surplus of eight per cent. However, east and northeast India recorded a 20 per cent deficit, with rainfall levels the second lowest since 1901. In contrast, northwest India experienced a 27.3 per cent surplus, its highest since 2001, causing severe flooding in Himalayan states. *—PTI*

Trump gives Hamas 3 days for Gaza deal, warns of 'sad end'

NEW YORK, 30 SEPT

US President Donald Trump has warned Hamas it has three to four days to respond to his newly unveiled 20-point peace plan for Gaza, cautioning that rejection could lead to a "very sad end." The proposal calls for a ceasefire, the release of hostages within 72 hours, Hamas's disarmament, and a gradual Israeli withdrawal. It also envisions a post-war transitional authority led by Trump himself. He said Israel, Arab and Muslim nations had agreed, leaving Hamas as the final obstacle.

Explaining his wider record on conflict resolution, Trump linked the Gaza plan to his past claims of mediating between India and Pakistan. Addressing military leaders, he said he had stopped a "very big" confrontation between the two nuclear-armed neighbours by threatening to cut off trade, adding that Pakistani officials had praised him for "saving millions of lives." Trump said both sides were "going at it" and had shot down several aircraft before his intervention halted escalation. *—Agencies*

>>>More on Pages 5 & 6

> **We welcome President Donald J. Trump's announcement of a comprehensive plan to end the Gaza conflict. It provides a viable pathway to long term and sustainable peace, security and development for the Palestinian and Israeli people, as also for the larger West Asian region**
>
> —Narendra Modi, PM

9 killed as steel arch collapses at Ennore power plant

CHENNAI, 30 SEPT

Nine workers died and at least one person was seriously injured after a steel arch collapsed at the Ennore Thermal Power construction site in Tamil Nadu on Tuesday. The victims were primarily from Assam and neighbouring regions, according to Dr J Radhakrishnan, Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO). The seriously injured worker, along with others initially thought to be critically hurt, were rushed to Stanley Government Hospital in North Chennai. BHEL officials arrived at the site, and rescue operations are ongoing.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an ex-gratia payment of Rs 2 lakh for the next of kin of each worker killed and Rs 50,000 for the injured. Authorities from the Avadi Police Commissionerate confirmed that a full investigation has been launched to determine the cause of the accident.

In a separate incident in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, six workers died and another six were injured when the roof of a structure collapsed at a private steel plant in the Siltara industrial area. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai expressed his grief and instructed the district administration to ensure the injured receive immediate medical care. *—ANI*

ADAR POONAWALLA FRONTRUNNER

Diageo likely to sell RCB for $2B after stampede row

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB), the newly crowned Indian Premier League (IPL) champions, has been officially put up for sale by its owner, United Spirits Limited (USL), a subsidiary of the British multinational Diageo, CNBC reported.

The company is reportedly seeking a staggering valuation of USD 2 billion, or roughly Rs 17,762 crore, which would rank RCB among the most valuable sporting franchises globally.

According to reports, Adar Poonawalla, CEO of the Serum Institute of India, has emerged as the frontrunner to acquire USL's entire stake. The high-profile transaction is being managed by global investment bank Citi, underscoring the scale and significance of the deal.

- The company is seeking a valuation of USD 2 billion, or roughly Rs 17,762 crore, which would rank RCB among the most valuable sporting franchises.

Diageo has long viewed RCB as a "non-core" asset, and speculation about a sale had circulated for several years.

The move has now gained momentum in the wake of RCB's historic first ever title win in IPL 2025 which greatly boosted its international visibility and expanded its already strong fan base, much of it credited to the enduring popularity of superstar batter Virat Kohli.

If finalised, the sale is expected to set a new benchmark for IPL team valuations.

The Gujarat Titans, a younger franchise, was recently valued at around Rs 7,500 crore following a majority stake acquisition. Former IPL commissioner Lalit Modi has predicted that RCB's sale could establish a new "floor price" for all future team deals, likely attracting interest from sovereign wealth funds and global investors eager to tap into India's booming cricket economy. *—Agencies*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Wife break husband's limbs to avoid selling land

BAGALKOT, 30 SEPT

A Bagalkot family's land dispute turned violent when a woman broke her husband's hand and legs to prevent him from selling their dry 4-acre agricultural field. The incident occurred on 4 September in Sonna village of Bilagi taluk of Bagalkot district, where the woman, Mahadevi and her husband, Kalmesh Jogi, 37, had multiple arguments after he suggested the sale of the agricultural land while proposing to buy another with the money, to which Mahadevi opposed. As Jogi's decision remained the same, Mahadevi, with her brother, Shankrappa Jadimani's help assaulted her husband with a stick, breaking his left hand and both his knees. After the incident Jogi filed an FIR against the both at the Bagalkot SP office on Tuesday. *—Salar News*

Man held for bomb threat case taken to Himachal

SHIMLA, 30 SEPT

A man arrested in Karnataka over a series of bomb threat emails has been brought to Kulu, Himachal Pradesh, and placed on a five-day police remand. The accused, Nitin Sharma, was apprehended by Mysuru Police in August, 2025. Himachal authorities sought his remand in connection with an email received by the Deputy Commissioner's office in Kulu on 2 May, 2025, warning of explosions at public places. Similar threats were reported at DC offices in Chamba and Hamirpur, as well as the Chief Secretary's office. Investigations traced the devices used, including stolen phones seized from Mangaluru and Bengaluru. Sharma, a New Delhi resident, has a prior record in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and Hyderabad for issuing comparable threats. *—PTI*

CM holds aerial survey of flood-hit districts

Compensation would be given after new survey, State will provide above NDRF amount

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah conducts an aerial survey of flood-hit regions of Kalaburagi, Vijayapura, Yadgir, Bidar and Raichur with Minister Priyank Kharge

PHOTOS: SALAR

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah conducted an aerial survey of the flood-hit regions of Kalyana Karnataka. He inspected areas of Kalaburagi, Vijayapura, Yadgir, Bidar and Raichur districts on Tuesday. He announced that compensation would be provided to the affected people after the State government conducts a proper survey to asses the damages.

The districts of Kalaburagi, Vijayapura, Yadgir, and Raichur in the Kalyana Karnataka region have been affected, with floods from the Bhima River throwing normal life out of gear.

After conducting the aerial survey, he held a meeting with MLAs, Ministers and officials of the Vijayapura, Yadgir, Bidar and Kalaburagi districts at the District Collector's office.

In a statement, Siddaramaiah said that the previous "joint survey on crop damage had been completed and preparations were underway to distribute compensation, but the second round of crop damage has occurred. Therefore, the government decided to conduct a survey of crop damage".

> **Helicopter Siddaramaiah.... are you coming from Delhi or Mumbai for conducting the aerial survey? You're doing an aerial survey of your own State? Is this to avoid bad roads and pothole-filled roads, which have become a global news? Or are you doing the aerial survey, fearing that people may gherao you if you travel by road?**
>
> —R Ashoka, Opposition Leader

"According to the NDRF rules, there is Rs 8,500 per hectare for dry land, Rs 17,000 per hectare for irrigated land, and Rs 22,500 for perennial crops. This will be released as soon as the survey is completed," he said.

The State government would provide an additional compensation above the NDRF amount. of Rs 8,500 for dry land per hectare, for a total of Rs 17,000; Rs 17,000 per hectare for irrigated land for a total of Rs 25,500; and Rs 22,500 per hectare for perennial crops, totalling Rs 31,000, he said. He added damages to houses would also be assessed.

"The Revenue Department estimates that compensation of around Rs 1,000 crores may be needed," he added.

Asserting that the government had no shortage of funds, he added, "The Maharashtra government has requested the Centre for Rs 2,200 crore in relief for floods. We will urge the Centre to release funds for the State also." *—Salar News*

Rains wash away new Belagavi bridge

A low-level bridge connecting Sambaragi and Agrani villages in Kagwad taluk, Belagavi district, was washed away by the heavy flow of the Agrani river on Monday night.

The bridge, built last year at a cost of Rs 50 lakh across the Agrani, a tributary of the Krishna, had been inaugurated by Kagwad Congress MLA Raju (Bharamagouda) Kage. The region has been receiving incessant rainfall since Sunday.

The BJP alleged that the collapse of the newly-built bridge was yet another example of corruption in the Siddaramaiah-led government, blaming substandard construction work.

Countering the allegation, MLA Kage clarified that the project had been sanctioned when the BJP was in power under then chief minister Basavaraj Bommai. *—Salar News*

80% commission govt: Ashoka slams Congress

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

Senior BJP leader R Ashoka on Tuesday demanded Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's immediate resignation in the wake of the State Contractors' Association's allegations about corruption in the Congress government.

Calling the Siddaramaiah administration an "80 per cent commission government", the Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly said the State cannot afford this "brazenly corrupt" Congress regime anymore.

The Karnataka State Contractors' Association (KSCA) had last week written to Siddaramaiah alleging that commission for clearing payments in several departments under the current Congress government has "doubled" compared with the previous BJP regime.

The "40 per cent commission" allegation by KSCA had helped the Congress wrest power from the BJP during the 2023 Assembly polls.

"When in Opposition, Siddaramaiah and DK Shivakumar (Deputy CM) shouted about 40 percent commission. Today, under their rule, contractors themselves have exposed that the rate has doubled - Karnataka has become an 80 percent commission government!", Ashoka posted on X.

He questioned why ministers are not coming forward to deny the charges. "Why is the CM silent when the State's reputation is being dragged through the mud? Why are projects like Bidadi Township being used as a pretext for illicit real estate deals and acquisition of fertile farmers' land?"

"If Siddaramaiah has even a shred of dignity left, he must resign immediately," Ashoka added. *—PTI*

DKS rules out congestion tax plan in City

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar ruled out a "congestion tax" in City, a measure that had been touted in an effort to ease traffic woes.

The congestion tax was among the measures discussed at a recent meeting on an action plan to decongest City, sources said.

"All those things are false; there is no such tax or anything. Some industrialists have said that they will give some suggestions, but it has not come to my level," Shivakumar, who also holds the Bengaluru Development portfolio, told press at the KPCC office.

On the BJP's criticism, he said, "The BJP should be planning such things. Such a plan should be at the Central government level. There is no such plan in our government."

CHALLENGES HDK FOR PUBLIC DEBATE

Shivakumar challenged Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy for a public debate, urging the JD(S) leader to stop his "hit and run" style accusations against him.

"Kumaraswamy is doing 'hit and run' on me. This needs to end. Let the media facilitate an open debate," he said.

Asked about Kumaraswamy's statement that Shivakumar may go to jail soon, he said, "Kumaraswamy has been conspiring for a long time."

Asked about Kumaraswamy's suggestion that the State government must develop a cordial relation with the Centre to get more funds, he remarked, "The State delegation is ready to go to Delhi under his leadership."

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar inspects the condition of roads in the City on Tuesday. He said that 13,000 potholes have been filled till now

PHOTO: X

> **To lay concrete at the junctions of arterial roads, we would need 26 more days... It has been decided to release Rs 1,100 crore to MLAs to develop roads at the ward level.**
>
> —DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

POTHOLE DEATH

Shivakumar dismissed the Opposition's claim that the college student who died during a road accident in City was caused by potholes as a "hoax".

On Monday, 20-year-old Dhanushree, a final-year B Com student, died after being allegedly hit from behind by a tipper truck near Budigere Cross in City while riding a two-wheeler.

The BJP said that 60 per cent of the roads in the State has turned "into a death trap due to misrule by the Congress government".

While some alleged she lost control after abruptly changing direction to avoid a pothole, police said they were examining CCTV footage to ascertain the exact sequence of events. *—Salar News*

HM urges SIT to complete Dharmasthala probe soon

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

Home Minister G Parameshwara said the government directed the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing allegations of multiple murders, rapes and burials in Dharmasthala to complete the investigation at the earliest.

He also said the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) reports in connection with the case are pending.

Parameshwara told press on Tuesday, "SIT is doing its job. FSL reports have to come. The recently discovered materials have been sent to FSL. We have asked them to finalise and send the reports on what was found earlier. We have told the SIT to complete the probe at the earliest."

> **One after the other, people coming and filing applications in connection with the case. The probe cannot continue; there should be an end**
>
> —G Parameshwara, Home Minister

Further, he said, "We cannot tell the SIT to complete the probe tomorrow or the day after."

On a question relating to a Supreme Court order in May dismissing a writ petition filed by the complainant and others, he said the SIT may consider that factor in their report.

On the delay in action against activist Mahesh Shetty Thimarody, Parameshwara said, "Let's see what happens in court. Action will be taken against him, or he will be arrested in accordance with the law by the police."

Thimarody is said have supported the complainant. He had also been spearheading the campaign seeking justice for the 2012 rape-and-murder case of Soujany. *—PTI*

Authorities initially suspected an LPG cylinder blast damaged the house in Hassan district on Tuesday

PHOTO: PTI

Couple injured in mysterious blast in Hassan

HASSAN, 30 SEPT

A couple in Alur taluk, Hassan district, Karnataka, sustained critical injuries in a suspicious explosion at their home late on Monday evening. Sudarshan, 32, and Kavya, 28, suffered severe burn injuries and were immediately transferred to Victoria Hospital in Bengaluru for urgent medical treatment.

Authorities initially suspected an LPG cylinder blast, but police have not ruled out other potential causes. Superintendent of Police Mohammed Sujeetha MS said the explosion occurred near the washroom while the couple were working in a passage area of the house. The complainant, Mohan Kumar, suggested it could have been either a cylinder-related accident or linked to Sudarshan's part-time carpentry work.

Police registered a case and launched a comprehensive investigation. A Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team, along with specialist officers from Bengaluru, was dispatched to collect samples, including chemical components, to determine the precise cause of the blast.

Sujeetha emphasised that the probe is not restricted to a cylinder explosion. Authorities are examining all possible factors, including household equipment and tools associated with carpentry, to ascertain the origin of the blast. The investigation remains ongoing while the couple continues to receive critical care in the City. *—PTI*

Prajwal Revanna appeals against life sentence

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

Former JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna has filed an appeal in the Karnataka High Court against his conviction and life sentence in one of the sexual abuse and rape cases registered against him.

Last month, a special court sentenced Prajwal to imprisonment for the remainder of his life and imposed a total fine of Rs 11.50 lakh, of which Rs 11.25 lakh is designated for the victim. The case involves a 48-year-old woman who worked at the family's farmhouse in Holenarasipura, Hassan district, & was allegedly raped twice in 2021. The court relied on video recordings, DNA analysis, and biological traces to convict him.

Prajwal, arrested in May, 2024, has challenged the verdict on multiple grounds. His petition highlights alleged contradictions between the survivor's police complaint and testimony, questions the credibility of prosecution evidence, and points to delays in filing the complaint. He also noted the survivor attended a family housewarming in 2023.

He faces three other separate charges. Last week, the State High Court dismissed his plea to transfer two cases alleging judicial bias. *—PTI*

NO SPACE FOR DISSENT

Members of Karnataka Rashtra Samithi Party being detained at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Tuesday as they protest the alleged atrocity against a woman by a police officer at Madanayakanahalli. The Karnataka State Women's Commission, in a letter, claimed that the Madanayakanahalli police inspector allegedly snatched a woman's phone, dragged her on the road, and subjected her to inhuman treatment ***PHOTO: MOHAMAD ASAD***

City court reserves ruling in Darshan jail facilities case

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

The 57th Sessions court in the City has reserved its order for 9 October regarding the jail conditions of actor Darshan, currently detained as an accused in the Renukaswamy murder case. During Tuesday's hearing, Darshan's counsel, advocate Sunil, argued for the actor's transfer to a different cell, citing excessive restrictions. He questioned, "Why is so much security only for Darshan?" and raised concerns about his 45-day stay in a quarantine cell. Special Public Prosecutor Prasanna Kumar countered, urging specificity in requests, while the judge also asked Sunil to be concise. *—PTI*

TICKET PRICED AT RS 200

HC refuses to lift stay order on movie ticket prices

BENGALURU, 30 SEPT

The Karnataka High Court on Tuesday refused to stay a single judge order that had stayed the Karnataka Cinemas (Regulation) (Amendment) Rules 2025 which caps movie ticket prices at Rs 200.

The State government on 12 September had issued a notification capping movie ticket prices at Rs 200 across all theatres, including multiplexes.

On 23 September, a single judge stayed the cap until further orders, based on a plea moved by the Multiplex Association of India and other entities.

The vacation bench of Justice Suraj Govindaraj and Justice Rajesh Rai K expanded the interim order stating, "The interest of justice would be served by expanding the interim order to protect the interest of all concerned."

It directed the Multiplex Association of India to maintain the accounts of collection from ticket sales and submit them to the Government before the 15th of next month until the court passes a final ruling, Livelaw reported.

Notably, multi-screen cinemas with premium facilities of 75 seats or less are exempted from maximum ticket price limit of Rs 200. *—Agencies*

PHOTO: ANI

Cong leader seeks security for Rahul & family

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

Former Maharashtra minister and CWC member Naseem Khan on Tuesday demanded a security upgrade for opposition leader Rahul Gandhi and other members of the Gandhi family. In a letter addressed to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Khan said BJP spokesperson Printo Mahadevan had allegedly threatened to shoot Rahul Gandhi and described the incident as "extremely serious and alarming". The Congress leader demanded strict action against Mahadevan. Special protection be provided to Rahul Gandhi, Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi, and Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi. Rahul spoke for the public, he said.—*PTI*

'US barred India from attacking Pak over 26/11'

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram revealed that India considered military retaliation against Pakistan following the 26/11 Mumbai attacks,but refrained due to pressure from the international community, particularly the United States. He recounted a meeting with former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who urged restraint. Chidambaram's comments have drawn sharp criticism from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with Minister Pralhad Joshi mocking him for acknowledging a mishandling of the 26/11 crisis. BJP's Shehzad Poonawala questioned why the then UPA government allegedly took orders from Congress leader Sonia Gandhi regarding national security. This debate resurfaces amidst tensions following Operation Sindoor, India's military response to a recent terror attack.
—*AGENCIES*

Protest in Kerala Assembly over threat to Rahul

T'PURAM, 30 SEPT

The Kerala Assembly was adjourned Tuesday following a fierce protest by Opposition members over a BJP leader's alleged death threat against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. The Congress-led UDF sought an adjournment motion to discuss the remark, but Speaker AN Shamseer denied it, stating the issue lacked "immediate relevance." Leader of Opposition VD Satheesan contested this, questioning how a threat against a Lok Sabha leader could be considered irrelevant. Satheesan accused the government of shielding the BJP leader, against whom a case was registered. As UDF members moved towards the Speake,security intervened.—*PTI*

PM adviser flays long vacations in higher courts

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Comments made by Sanjeev Sanyal, a prominent member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, have reignited debate over the judiciary in India. Sanyal described the judiciary as the "biggest hurdle" to the nation's aspiration of becoming Viksit Bharat (Developed India) during a talk at the General Counsels' Association of India's Nyaya Nirmaan 2025 forum, attended by ministers, judges, and industry leaders. The remarks drew sharp criticism from Vikas Singh, President of the Supreme Court Bar Association and Senior Advocate, who labelled Sanyal's comments as "irresponsible" and "made in bad taste". He emphasised, "Anybody making a comment on the vacations of the higher court is completely lacking in understanding of how these higher courts function."—*PTI*

DMK blames TVK for violations at rally

DMK releases video, says venue was rejected due to its close proximity to a petrol bunk

CHENNAI, 30 SEPT

The Tamil Nadu government on Tuesday released video clippings showing violation of norms at the rally of actor-politician Vijay in Karur and said the estimated crowd that attended had more than doubled, thus causing a lot of hardships.

The state government explained some of the basic facts on the stampede and related incidents and also explained its views over such aspects.

The government has also warned against rumours, publishing content to instigate violence or to circulate rumours.

The government briefed the media after actor-politician Vijay released a video explaining his stand on the stampede, claiming his innocence.

TVK cadres were seen climbing on the roof of shops and houses in Namakkal and Karur.

TVK's preferred venue, Karur Roundtana, was rejected due to its proximity to a petrol bunk and a sewage canal. The supply was not suspended during the rally.

Tamil Nadu government spokesperson P Amudha (centre) said that the crowd surged towards the electricity generator enclosure, causing the focus lights to fail **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

The police had told Vijay to halt 50 metres ahead of the designated spot due to "overcrowding, but organisers did not oblige."

Government spokesperson, P Amudha said the crowd surged towards the electricity generator enclosure, causing the focus lights to fail.

On the postmortem of the victims, Health Secretary Senthil Kumar said procedures were followed to reduce anxiety for the bereaved families.

Another video showed fans following Vijay's campaign bus on a motorcycle, which met with an accident.

The clip also showed another incident involving a vehicle chasing the bus and violation of traffic rules, vehicles moving along the wrong route and so on.

Vijay's campaign in Madurai, Villupuram, Tiruchirappalli, Namakkal and Karur resulted in a trail of road accidents, he said.

Karur accounted for a maximum of 114 injuries due to road accidents, while 42 sustained injuries were reported in Villupuram, 14 in Madurai, and 12 in Tiruchirappalli, police sources said. — *PTI*

2 TVK workers sent to judicial custody

KARUR, 30 SEPT

Two office bearers of the TVK were on Tuesday sentenced to 14 days' judicial custody in connection with the stampede during a party rally here. Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam's Karur West District Secretary VP Mathiyalagan and Karur Central District Secretary Kasi Pounraj were named in the FIR and remanded to judicial custody. TVK state general secretary Bussy Anand and deputy general secretary Nirmal Kumar are also named in the FIR but are yet to be arrested, the police added. —*PTI*

Youtuber held for fake news on stampede

CHENNAI, 30 SEPT

Felix Gerald, a YouTuber from Tamil Nadu operating the RedPix channel, has been arrested by the Cyber Crime Police for allegedly disseminating false information regarding the Karur stampede that resulted in 41 fatalities during actor-politician Vijay's campaign for the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK). Authorities detained Gerald after confirming he had uploaded misleading content related to the tragic incident. On Monday, the Chennai Police initiated investigations against 25 individuals for sharing inflammatory posts on social media.—*PTI*

NDA PANEL QUESTIONS CHOICE OF RALLY VENUE

KARUR, 30 SEPT

A panel of NDA MPs probing the 27 September Karur stampede, which killed 41 people at actor-politician Vijay's TVK rally, on Tuesday questioned the venue allotted for the event.

Panel head and BJP MP Hema Malini said the site was inappropriate, noting narrow space, sudden power cut and people falling into open sewers. "Such a thing is unheard of. The responsibility is whose, the administration or the organisers? We have to know that," she said.

She stressed rallies must be properly organised with full security and added even 1,000 people could not stand in the space allotted where 10,000 gathered.

The panel, including Anurag Thakur, has prepared a questionnaire for officials and demanded a probe by a Supreme Court judge.

Meanwhile, Congress general secretary KC Venugopal met bereaved families and the injured, calling the tragedy beyond imagination, and distributed relief cheques of Rs 2.5 lakh each. — *PTI*

A BJP delegation led by MP and actor Hema Malini interacts with officials during a visit to the stampede spot in Karur **PHOTO: PTI**

ED searches Reliance Infra in FEMA case

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday conducted searches in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh as part of a FEMA investigation being conducted against Anil Ambani Group company Reliance Infrastructure.

Six premises of some linked entities in Mumbai and Mhow in Indore were searched.

The company said in a statement that the ED action was in relation to a matter "dating back 15 years".

The work was completed and the company has no continuing connection or relationship with the said contractor. The toll road is with the NHAI for the last 4 years, Reliance Infra said.

The ED has been investigating alleged financial irregularities and collective loan "diversion" pegged at more than Rs 17,000 crore by multiple group companies of Anil Ambani, including Reliance Infrastructure (R Infra), under the criminal provisions of the anti-money laundering law

The agency action under the PMLA came on a SEBI report alleging that R Infra "diverted" funds disguised as inter-corporate deposits (ICDs) to Reliance Group companies through a company named CLE. It was alleged that R Infra did not disclose CLE as its "related party" to avoid approvals from shareholders and audit panels.

The Reliance Group earlier denied the allegations. —*PTI*

KDA backs LAB stand, talks stalled

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) on Tuesday said it will not resume talks with the Centre until climate activist Sonam Wangchuk and others arrested in Leh are released and a judicial probe into the 24 September police firing is ordered.

Addressing reporters, KDA Co-Chairman Asgar Ali Karbalai said, "We are in touch with Apex Body Leh. Talks cannot continue until the arrested are freed and a judicial inquiry is constituted." He dismissed the Union Territory administration's allegations and condemned branding Ladakhis as 'anti-national.'

The Apex Body Leh has also suspended dialogue, with leaders Thupstan Chhewang and Chering Dorjay insisting on a conducive atmosphere before negotiations resume. Four people were killed and dozens injured in the clashes, while over 60, including Wangchuk, were arrested.

Meanwhile, curfew in Leh town was relaxed for seven hours from 10 am on Tuesday, allowing partial reopening of markets, and providing relief to the people who were reeling under week-long curbs, officials said.

Restrictions, however, remain, with internet services suspended and heavy security deployment continuing. Lieutenant Governor Kavinder Gupta urged peace and unity.—*PTI*

Security personnel patrol at a market during a four-hour relaxation in the curfew, in Leh, on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, you have betrayed the people of Ladakh. They are demanding their rights. Communicate with them - stop the politics of violence and fear

-Rahul Gandhi, Congress Leader

Ladakh DGP's video is deepfake: PIB

JAMMU, 30 SEPT

A viral video, in which Ladakh director general of police SD Singh is seen claiming that activist Sonam Wangchuk was arrested on directions of the defence minister, is deepfake, the Press Information Bureau said. It said the DGP has made no such statement. "Beware of such AI-generated videos shared with the intent to mislead public and cause confusion and panic," the PIB said. The PIB Fact Check unit further advised people to stay vigilant.—*PTI*

Delhi students to learn about RSS under 'Rashtraneeti'

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Students of Delhi government schools will soon be taught about the RSS under a new education programme, 'Rashtraneeti', featuring lessons on freedom fighters including Veer Savarkar, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Education Minister Ashish Sood said on Tuesday.

"The chapter on RSS is being added under this programme to inculcate civic and social consciousness among students and to bring Fundamental Duties into focus," Sood said.

The chapter under the educational programme titled 'Rashtraneeti' has been designed to promote civic awareness, ethical governance and national pride among students from Class 1 to Class 12. RSS's origin and histiory will be taught. —*PTI*

Witch-hunt against Wangchuk, says wife

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Gitanjali Angmo, the wife of education reformer and activist Sonam Wangchuk and co-founder of the Himalayan Institute of Alternatives Ladakh (HIAL), on Tuesday alleged that "baseless narratives" were being spread against him and his institutes to project him as an "anti-national" as part of a "witch-hunt".

Wangchuk, who has been at the forefront of the movement seeking statehood and extension of the Sixth Schedule to Ladakh, was detained under the stringent National Security Act (NSA) in Leh on Friday for allegedly instigating the violent protests on 24 September that left four people dead and scores of others, including security personnel, injured.

,Angmo challenged authorities to an open debate on the allegations, including those suggesting links to Pakistan, and said neither she has been able to contact Wangchuk nor has she been provided with formal documents detailing the charges against him by the administration.She called the situation a witch -hunt. —*PTI*

INDIA CONDEMNS VIOLENT ACT

UK police probes vandalism of Gandhi statue in London

LONDON, 30 SEPT

Britain's Metropolitan Police said on Tuesday that it has begun its investigation into the criminal damage caused to Mahatma Gandhi's statue at Tavistock Square in London, a crime which the force is treating as "racially aggravated".

The plinth of the statue was defaced with disturbing graffiti, which was condemned by the High Commission of India in London as a "violent attack".

The local Camden Council authorities, meanwhile, confirmed that their cleaning teams were sent to the site to assess the damage and are involved with the restoration work.

"This is not just vandalism, but a violent attack on the idea of non-violence, three days before the International Day of Non-Violence, and on the legacy of the Mahatma," the Indian High Commission said.

Gandhi Jayanti, designated as International Day of Non-Violence by the United Nations, is commemorated with floral tributes and Gandhiji's favourite bhajans at the monument in London annually on October 2.

The bronze sculpture, created with the backing of the India League, was unveiled in 1968 at the square as a nod to Mahatma Gandhi's days as a law student at the nearby University College London. The sculpture depicts Gandhi in a classic meditative pose, with the inscription on the plinth saying: "Mahatma Gandhi, 1869-1948".

Over time, Tavistock Square Gardens has become known as a peace park and a quiet place for reflection, with the Gandhi statue taking centre-stage surrounded by cherry trees commemorating victims of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima.

It is one of two memorials that host the annual Gandhi Jayanti ceremonies in London, the second and newer bronze statue located at Parliament Square. —*PTI*

BJP's Vijay Kumar Malhotra dies at 94

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

A heavyweight in Delhi poliA heavyweight in Delhi politics and one of the last surviving Jana Sangh-era politicians, Vijay Kumar Malhotra's interests bled into several spheres, and sports and journalism were only two of them.

His death at 94 on Tuesday drew homilies from top leaders of the BJP, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who hailed him as a people's man who kept his ear to the ground.

With his demise, the Kedar Nath Sahni-Madan Lal Khurana-VK Malhotra era in Delhi also came to a close, a party leader said.

The three wielded a clout in an era when the BJP had little influence in the city.

Malhotra was born in Lahore, Pakistan, on 3 December, 1931. His family settled in Delhi after the Partition. Malhotra was the only BJP winner from Delhi in the 2004 general election that resulted in the exit of the BJP-led NDA government headed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee. —*PTI*

Union Minister for Defence Rajnath Singh attends a seminar organised by the Indian Air Force at Subroto Park, in New Delhi **PHOTO: PTI**

Tri-services' integration crucial for survival: Rajnath

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh emphasised the critical need for tri-service integration during an event on Tuesday, referencing the successful Operation Sindoor as a model for future military operations. He noted that the operation showcased a "unified real-time operational picture," enabling commanders to make timely decisions while minimising the risk of fratricide.

Singh stated, "This is the living example of jointness delivering decisive results and this success must become the benchmark for all future operations." He stressed that collaborative strength across land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace is essential in the evolving security landscape, declaring jointness a "fundamental requirement for our national security."

Recalling the recent Combined Commanders' Conference, Singh reiterated the government's commitment to promoting integration among the tri-services, asserting, "This is not only a matter of policy but a matter of survival in the fast-changing security environment." He concluded by urging for a shift away from compartmentalisation towards open sharing and collective learning in the armed forces. —*PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Online betting app: ED quizzes Urvashi Rautela

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Actor and model Urvashi Rautela on Tuesday appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case linked to online betting platform 1xBet, official sources said. Rautela, 31, is the India ambassador of the Curacao-registered firm. Her statement is being recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.The ED has recently questioned cricketers Yuvraj Singh, Suresh Raina, Robin Uthappa and Shikhar Dhawan, as well as actors Sonu Sood, Mimi Chakraborty and Ankush Hazra, alongside several online influencers. Assets worth crores acquired with endorsement fees may be attached as 'proceeds of crime.'The Union government recently banned real-money online gaming, having 22 crore users.—*PTI*

7th child dies of kidney infection in Madhya Pradesh

CHHINDWARA, 30 SEPT

A four-year-old boy from Chhindwara district, Madhya Pradesh, has died from a suspected kidney infection, marking the seventh child fatality this month. Officials said the latest victim, Vikas Yaduvanshi of Dighawani village, passed away at a Nagpur hospital on Saturday. His last rites were performed on Sunday. Most cases were reported from Tamia and neighbouring Koylanchal, around 55km from Chhindwara town, where several children are still receiving treatment. Initial symptoms include high fever and difficulty urinating. Authorities have collected medical and water samples from affected areas, with investigations being conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research and state health teams. Doctors are on alert.—*PTI*

IndiGo's Delhi bound flight gets bomb threat

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

An IndiGo flight from Mumbai to Delhi received a bomb threat on Tuesday morning, officials said. Flight 6E 762 carried around 200 passengers, and the threat was found to be non-specific. An IndiGo spokesperson confirmed a security alert onboard, saying, "Following established protocol, we informed the relevant authorities immediately and fully cooperated with them in carrying out necessary security checks before the aircraft was cleared for operations." A full emergency was declared upon arrival at Delhi airport. The Airbus A321 neo landed at around 7.53 am, according to flight tracking website Flightradar24.com. The airline provided refreshments, updates, and ensured passenger safety. No untoward incident occurred and the flight continued safely.—*PTI*

Wayanad yet to get Rs 260 cr landslide relief

T'PURAM, 30 SEPT

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan announced in the Assembly on Tuesday that the Centre has approved Rs 260.65 crore in aid for the landslide-affected Wayanad region, but the state is yet to receive the funds. The state had originally requested Rs 2,262 crore for rehabilitation and reconstruction, later revising this figure to Rs 2,221.10 crore based on a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment report. Vijayan also highlighted Kerala's appeal for Wayanad to be declared a "national disaster" and requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi's intervention for loan waivers for survivors, though "no favourable reply has been received so far." The rehabilitation project on 64.475 hectares of land is progressing, with completion expected soon—*PTI*

'India sees record 4.5 L crimes against women'

Cruelty by husband & in-laws are highest reported crime

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Close to 4.5 lakh crimes against women were reported in 2023, according to the latest National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data.

A total of 4,48,211 crimes against women were reported in 2023, an increase from 4,45,256 cases in 2022 and 4,28,278 in 2021

The figures, compiled from police records in states and union territories, indicate a national crime rate of 66.2 per cent incidents per lakh female population.

The overall chargesheeting rate for these cases stood at 77.6 per cent in 2023.

Among states, Uttar Pradesh reported the highest number of cases at 66,381, followed by Maharashtra at 47,101, Rajasthan at 45,450, West Bengal at 34,691 and Madhya Pradesh at 32,342.

Telangana led in crime rate at 124.9 per lakh female population, ahead of Rajasthan at 114.8, Odisha at 112.4, Haryana at 110.3, and Kerala at 86.1.

Cruelty by husband or relatives accounted for the largest share with 1,33,676 cases. Abduction of women, assault on women with intent to outrage modesty, rape, dowry deaths, abetment to suicide and insult to modesty were the other crimes reported.

The overall chargesheeting rate for these crimes against women stood at 77.6 per cent in 2023 PHOTO: AI

- The figures, compiled from police records in states and union territories, indicate a national crime rate of 66.2 percent incidents per lakh female population in the country.

Rape cases comprised 28,821 incidents involving women aged 18 and above, and 849 involving girls below 18. Acid attacks were reported in 113 cases.

Of these, 1,82,219 were chargesheeted and 1,82,219 cases were pending.

6,67,940 people were arrested in 2023 for crimes against women.

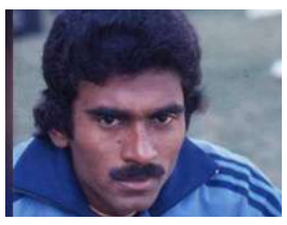
Meanwhile, India recorded 27,721 cases of murder in 2023, while crimes against scheduled tribes rose by a staggering 28 per cent.

Cybercrimes saw a 31.2 per cent increase with 86,420 cases. 27,721 murder cases were recorded in 2023, a dip of 2.8 per cent. 12,960 cases of crimes against scheduled tribes were reported. —*PTI*

Security personnel keep a vigil as administration conducts anti-encroachment drive in Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh PHOTO: PTI

Olympian Shahid's home demolished in Uttar Pradesh

VARANASI, 30 SEPT



A portion of Padma Shri awardee Olympian Mohammed Shahid's house located along the Kachery-Sandaha route at here was demolished by a bulldozer in a road-widening drive, triggering a protest from the late hockey player's family.

The administration claimed the demolition was carried out only on those properties for which compensation had already been paid.

Shahid's sister-in-law, Nazneen, claimed that she had not received any compensation and did not own any alternative property.

His cousin, Mushtaq said the family was preparing for a wedding in October and that that the affected household did not have even an inch of land elsewhere.

While road widening elsewhere had been limited to 21 metres, it was extended to 25 metres in this locality.

Varanasi ADM (City) Alok Verma said that nine people lived in Shahid's house, six of whom had received compensation. The remaining three had obtained stay orders from the court, and their portions were left untouched, he said.

So far 13 houses in the locality have been demolished.

Shahid's family had earlier asked for more time, citing the wedding. The administration, in response, requested their Aadhaar and account details for the compensation transfer, which they failed to submit.

Uttar Pradesh UP Congress president Ajay Rai denounced the demolition.

BJP's Mahanagar president Pradeep Agrahari said that only those who had received compensation whose houses were demolished.

The BJP leader said that roads are being widened at many places and the affected people are being duly compensated for it. —*PTI*

Pics, chats with women found on Delhi godman's phone

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Chaitanyanand Saraswati, aged 62, has been accused of sexually harassing 17 students at a private institute in the capital. On Tuesday, he was confronted by two female aides who allegedly intimidated victims and pressured them to delete explicit messages from his phone, a police officer reported.

Authorities uncovered multiple chats with women, as well as photographs of Saraswati posing with air hostesses and various display pictures of women, on his mobile devices. The self-styled godman reportedly conducted his illicit activities while serving as chairperson of a centrally approved private institution.

PHOTO: ANI

The officer stated that Saraswati is not cooperating with the investigation, displaying a lack of remorse and providing misleading responses. "He has shown no remorse for his actions and has been giving evasive replies," the officer noted.

His two female associates, employed at the institute in different capacities, are currently undergoing interrogation. Despite being confronted with substantial evidence, Saraswati continued to provide false statements. —*PTI*

- Multiple chats with women, as well as photographs of Saraswati with air hostesses and various display pictures of women were found on his mobile devices.

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Marriage to minor no shield against rape charge: HC

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

The Bombay High Court has determined that a 29-year-old man cannot evade rape charges under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act due to his marriage to a minor girl, now aged 17, and their subsequent child.

Justices Urmila Joshi Phalke and Nandesh Deshpande, on 26 September, rejected the man's argument that their relationship was consensual, insisting that "factual consent in a relationship between minors is immaterial under POCSO."

The accused, married after the girl turned 18, claimed that prosecution would harm them socially. However, the court highlighted that the primary aim of the POCSO Act is to protect children under 18 from sexual exploitation.

he court stated, "Merely because the girl has now given birth to a child, we believe that the illegal acts of the accused cannot be brushed aside." The appeal to quash the FIR against him and his family was denied. —*PTI*

Bareilly clash: Cleric's properties to be razed

BAREILLY, 30 SEPT

The Bareilly authorities have identified eight allegedly illegal properties linked to associates of Ittehad-e-Millat Council chief cleric Tauqeer Raza Khan for action.

Teams from the Bareilly Development Authority (BDA) and district administration carried out a joint drive in Faiq Enclave, Jagatpur, and the old city areas.

The structures are alleged to have been built without approved maps, with some encroaching on government and ceiling land.

Police claimed that Faiq Enclave has emerged as a hideout for criminals over the years.

Connections of Tauqeer's aides Farhat and coloniser Mohammad Arif with similar activities have surfaced..

Arif and his associates had encroached upon government land, roads and ceiling areas. Properties linked to Arif were sealed. An FIR will be filed against him.

A final decision on the demolition is expected later on Tuesday. Tauqeer's associates and financiers are being monitored. —*PTI*

ZUBEEN'S DEATH: CENTRE INVOKES MLAT WITH SINGAPORE

GUWAHATI, 30 SEPT

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced on Tuesday that the Indian government has officially invoked the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) with Singapore, following the investigation into the death of renowned singer Zubeen Garg. His passing occurred in Singapore on 19 September, reportedly due to drowning.

The Assam government submitted a formal request to the Ministry of Home Affairs, which has now initiated the treaty to facilitate cooperation. "The Ministry of Home Affairs has now formally invoked the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) in connection with the FIR lodged by Assam Police regarding the unfortunate demise of our beloved Zubeen," Sarma shared on 'X'.

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

Once invoked, the MLAT ensures full cooperation from Singaporean authorities, access to case details, and assistance in bringing back any accused individuals. The Assam government established a 10-member special investigation team to probe the incident, with two Assam Police officers already in Singapore seeking local assistance. —*PTI*

Weight loss drug Ozempiz to be launched in India

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Novo Nordisk is preparing to introduce Ozempic (semaglutide) in India, following the earlier launch of Mounjaro. The injectable drug, already popular worldwide, is primarily used to manage type 2 diabetes but is also known for its weight loss effect.

Vikrant Shrotiya, Novo Nordisk's India Head, said the launch will complete the company's semaglutide portfolio in the country, offering both oral and injectable options for diabetes and obesity treatment.

The company's patent on semaglutide expires in March 2026, after which leading Indian pharmaceutical firms are expected to release cheaper generics, likely lowering treatment costs. "Competitive intensity itself could bring down the cost of medicines," Shrotiya noted.

The World Health Organisation recently added Ozempic to the list of essential medicines, highlighting its value in diatetes and weight loss. 77 million Indians have type 2 diabetes. —*PTI*

Airport Authority services are taxable: SC

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The Supreme Court has affirmed that all services provided by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) at airports are subject to service tax, dismissing the AAI's appeal regarding its service tax liability from 2003 to 2007.

A bench comprising Justices Pankaj Mithal and PB Varale upheld the Customs, Excise & Service Tax Appellate Tribunal (CESTAT) decision made on 1 March 2017, which endorsed the service tax demand on various services provided by AAI, including those related to export cargo.

PHOTO: PTI

The services include cargo handling at airports, covering activities such as unloading, carting, X-ray screening, and export packing, from the point at which cargo is accepted until it is loaded onto the aircraft.

The AAI argued that the service tax demand was inappropriate for export cargo handling, which it claimed fell under an exemption outlined in Subsection (23) of Section 65 of the Finance Act, 1994.

However, the bench stated, "The definition of taxable service is very wide and takes into its fold any kind of service that may be provided... all kinds of services rendered by the Airports Authority in any airport are taxable services." The court noted that sub-clause (zzm) was introduced on 10 September 2004, making services related to export cargo taxable post this date.

The court concluded that the CESTAT had correctly determined that these services were taxable and affirmed the AAI's liability for the period from 1 October 2003 to 31 March 2007. —*PTI*

- The services include cargo handling at airports, covering activities such as unloading, carting, X-ray screening, and export packing, from the point at which cargo is accepted until it is loaded onto the aircraft.

SMALL TRADERS LEFT BEHIND

Bengal's Durga Pooja economy rebounds to Rs 50,000 cr

KOLKATA, 30 SEPT

West Bengal's Durga Pooja economy in 2025 rebounded strongly, expanding by an estimated 10–15 per cent to touch around Rs 46,000–50,000 crore after a decline last year, stakeholders said.

Buoyant corporate sponsorships, healthy footfalls in malls, rising spending on consumer goods and a positive sentiment among people are major contributors to the growth.

The festival - recognised by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage- remains a major economic driver for Bengal, thriving retail, hospitality, transport and handicraft sectors, and it is often believed that business activities surrounding the Durga Pooja contribute at least a third of the state's GDP.

State Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya said that Bengal's Pooja economy would see 15 per cent growth this year.

State Power Minister Aroop Biswas said this year electricity demand may touch 12,050 MW.

The state government gave Rs 1.1 lakh to over 45,000 committees this year.

Advertising linked to Pooja committees saw a surge in rates, with spots were booked well in advance. New consumer products were launched, aided by GST cuts.

Organised retailers reported a double-digit growth in revenue as compared with 2024.

White goods and automobile makers also reported strong traction, with festive bookings supported by GST cuts and financing schemes.

Sales via online platforms in the first two days after the GST rationalisation grew 23–25 per cent year-on-year—a four to five-fold jump in growth compared with last year's muted start.

However, hawkers and small traders said the season was subdued due to a shift in spending towards e-commerce platforms.

The National Hawkers Federation said the season was "very bad." —*PTI*

Devotees worship young girls dressed as Kumaris during Kumari Puja on Maha Ashtami in Kolkata in West Bengal on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

- Finance Minister C Bhattacharya said that Pooja economy would see 15 per cent growth this year. Power Minister Aroop Biswas said electricity demand may touch 12,050 MW.

THIS IS TRUMP'S PLAN TO 'END WAR' IN GAZA

The White House has released President Donald Trump's plan to end the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he supported the plan following a meeting with Trump at the White House on Monday, but it's unclear if Hamas will accept these terms.

President Donald Trump with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the West Wing of the White House in Washington **PHOTO: PTI**

Here is Trump's proposal, verbatim:

1. Gaza will be a deradicalised terror-free zone that does not pose a threat to its neighbours.

2. Gaza will be redeveloped for the benefit of the people of Gaza, who have suffered more than enough.

3. If both sides agree to this proposal, the war will immediately end. Israeli forces will withdraw to the agreed upon line to prepare for a hostage release. During this time, all military operations, including aerial and artillery bombardment, will be suspended, and battle lines will remain frozen until conditions are met for the complete staged withdrawal.

4. Within 72 hours of Israel publicly accepting this agreement, all hostages, alive and deceased, will be returned.

5. Once all hostages are released, Israel will release 250 life sentence prisoners plus 1,700 Gazans who were detained after 7 October, 2023, including all women and children detained in that context. For every Israeli hostage whose remains are released, Israel will release the remains of 15 deceased Gazans.

6. Once all hostages are returned, Hamas members who commit to peaceful co-existence and to decommission their weapons will be given amnesty. Members of Hamas who wish to leave Gaza will be provided safe passage to receiving countries.

7. Upon acceptance of this agreement, full aid will be immediately sent into the Gaza Strip. At a minimum, aid quantities will be consistent with what was included in the January 19, 2025, agreement regarding humanitarian aid, including rehabilitation of infrastructure (water, electricity, sewage), rehabilitation of hospitals and bakeries, and entry of necessary equipment to remove rubble and open roads.

8. Entry of distribution and aid in the Gaza Strip will proceed without interference from the two parties through the United Nations and its agencies, and the Red Crescent, in addition to other international institutions not associated in any manner with either party. Opening the Rafah crossing in both directions will be subject to the same mechanism implemented under the January 19, 2025 agreement.

9. Gaza will be governed under the temporary transitional governance of a technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee, responsible for delivering the day-to-day running of public services and municipalities for the people in Gaza. This committee will be made up of qualified Palestinians and international experts, with oversight and supervision by a new international transitional body, the "Board of Peace," which will be headed and chaired by President Donald J. Trump, with other members and heads of State to be announced, including Former Prime Minister Tony Blair.

This body will set the framework and handle the funding for the redevelopment of Gaza until such time as the Palestinian Authority has completed its reform programme, as outlined in various proposals, including President Trump's peace plan in 2020 and the Saudi-French proposal, and can securely and effectively take back control of Gaza. This body will call on best international standards to create modern and efficient governance that serves the people of Gaza and is conducive to attracting investment.

10. A Trump economic development plan to rebuild and energise Gaza will be created by convening a panel of experts who have helped birth some of the thriving modern miracle cities in the Middle East.

Many thoughtful investment proposals and exciting development ideas have been crafted by well-meaning international groups, and will be considered to synthesise the security and governance frameworks to attract and facilitate these investments that will create jobs, opportunity, and hope for future Gaza.

11. A special economic zone will be established with preferred tariff and access rates to be negotiated with participating countries.

12. No one will be forced to leave Gaza, and those who wish to leave will be free to do so and free to return. We will encourage people to stay and offer them the opportunity to build a better Gaza.

13. Hamas and other factions agree to not have any role in the governance of Gaza, directly, indirectly, or in any form. All military, terror, and offensive infrastructure, including tunnels and weapon production facilities, will be destroyed and not rebuilt.

There will be a process of demilitarisation of Gaza under the supervision of independent monitors, which will include placing weapons permanently beyond use through an agreed process of decommissioning, and supported by an internationally funded buy back and reintegration programme all verified by the independent monitors. New Gaza will be fully committed to building a prosperous economy and to peaceful coexistence with their neighbours.

14. A guarantee will be provided by regional partners to ensure that Hamas, and the factions, comply with their obligations and that New Gaza poses no threat to its neighbours or its people.

15. The United States will work with Arab and international partners to develop a temporary International Stabilization Force (ISF) to immediately deploy in Gaza. The ISF will train and provide support to vetted Palestinian police forces in Gaza, and will consult with Jordan and Egypt who have extensive experience in this field.

This force will be the long-term internal security solution. The ISF will work with Israel and Egypt to help secure border areas, along with newly trained Palestinian police forces. It is critical to prevent munitions from entering Gaza and to facilitate the rapid and secure flow of goods to rebuild and revitalize Gaza. A deconfliction mechanism will be agreed upon by the parties.

16. Israel will not occupy or annex Gaza. As the ISF establishes control and stability, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) will withdraw based on standards, milestones, and timeframes linked to demilitarisation that will be agreed upon between the IDF, ISF, the guarantors, and the Unites States, with the objective of a secure Gaza that no longer poses a threat to Israel, Egypt, or its citizens. Practically, the IDF will progressively hand over the Gaza territory it occupies to the ISF according to an agreement they will make with the transitional authority until they are withdrawn completely from Gaza, save for a security perimeter presence that will remain until Gaza is properly secure from any resurgent terror threat.

17. In the event Hamas delays or rejects this proposal, the above, including the scaled-up aid operation, will proceed in the terror-free areas handed over from the IDF to the ISF.

18. An interfaith dialogue process will be established based on the values of tolerance and peaceful co-existence to try and change mindsets and narratives of Palestinians and Israelis by emphasising the benefits that can be derived from peace.

19. While Gaza re-development advances and when the PA reform programme is faithfully carried out, the conditions may finally be in place for a credible pathway to Palestinian self-determination and statehood, which we recognise as the aspiration of the Palestinian people.

20. The United States will establish a dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians to agree on a political horizon for peaceful and prosperous co-existence. *—PTI*

SALAR سالار

'World's big cities see 26% rise in extreme hot days'

- The analysis warns that residents of informal settlements in cities such as Delhi are particularly vulnerable to sustained high temperatures because of poor housing and infrastructure.

The world's major cities are now experiencing a quarter more very hot days every year on average than they did three decades ago, according to a new analysis published on Tuesday.

Researchers at the UK-based International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) examined temperature data from 43 key cities, including the 40 most populous capitals, dating back to 1994.

They found that the number of days above 35 degrees Celsius (very hot days) in these cities rose by 26 per cent over the 31-year period, climbing from an average of 1,062 annually between 1994 and 2003 to 1,335 between 2015 and 2024.

Delhi, one of the cities where the population has grown by at least half since 2013, is among those facing worsening heat stress.

The analysis warns that residents of informal settlements in cities such as Delhi are particularly vulnerable to sustained high temperatures because of poor housing and infrastructure.

The study shows 2024 recorded the highest number of very hot days, 1,612 across the selected cities. This was 196 more than in 2019, the second highest, and 52 per cent higher than the tally in 1994.

The top three years for extreme heat have all come in the past six years, with 2024 followed by 2023 and 2019.

Antananarivo (Madagascar), Cairo (Egypt), Johannesburg (South Africa), Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo), Manila (Philippines), Rome (Italy), Tokyo (Japan), Washington DC (US), and Yaounde (Cameroon) notched a record number of very hot days in 2024.

In Brazil, which will host COP30, the capital Brasilia saw only three days above 35 degrees between 1994 and 2003, compared to 40 in the most recent decade. São Paulo, known for its cooler climate, had 120 days above 30 degrees in 2024, the most in the study period.

The study found temperatures are rising in Europe too.

In Rome, Italy, the average number of days above 35 degrees went up from 11 between 1994 and 2003 to 24 in the last decade.

People in Madrid (Spain) faced 25 such days on average in the earlier period, which increased to 47 between 2015 and 2024. Berlin (Germany) also recorded more very hot days.

Anna Walnycki, a researcher at IIED, said: "Global temperatures are rising faster than governments probably expected and definitely faster than they seem to be reacting."

She added, "Failing to adapt will condemn millions of city dwellers to increasingly uncomfortable and even dangerous conditions because of the urban heat island effect."

The poorest will likely suffer the most whether they are in London, Luanda, or Lima, but the impacts will be significantly worse in low-income or unplanned communities in the Global South thanks to lower-quality housing and infrastructure, she added.

IIED said cities urgently need funding to improve insulation and ventilation in buildings, develop heat action plans and create shade cover, while ensuring new construction is fit for a warming world.

The analysis notes that nearly a third of the global urban population lives in informal settlements, leaving them most exposed to deadly heatwaves.

The 43 cities studied have a combined population of about 470 million, a figure that is expected to rise sharply in the coming decades. *—PTI*

Delhi, one of the cities where the population has grown by at least half since 2013, is among those facing worsening heat stress **PHOTO: AI**

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

India watches as Trump moves closer to Pak amid strained ties

Ties between Pakistan and the US continue to build momentum under President Donald Trump as Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and Army Chief Asim Munir visited the White House last week, bearing praise for Trump along with plans for more economic and strategic cooperation.

In a statement, Sharif thanked Trump for helping broker a deal in July promising a lower tariff rate for Pakistan in return for US investment in Pakistan's energy, mining and agriculture sectors.

The White House share photos from the Oval Office meeting, where Munir is seen presenting Trump with a box full of rare earth minerals. This is Munir's second visit to the US this year.

It remains doubtful whether Pakistan really possesses "massive" oil reserves, as Trump has put it. But Trump notably took a jab at New Delhi when announcing the deal in July, quipping that India may "one day buy Pakistani oil".

Sharif' also called Trump a "man of peace" last week and credited the President for helping facilitate a ceasefire between India and Pakistan after a short-lived conflict in May, which was sparked by a deadly terrorists attack on tourists in Kashmir.

Munir has said Trump deserves a Nobel Peace Prize, while India denies Trump played any role in the ceasefire.

Pakistan's rising star at the White House comes as ties between the US and India continue to nosedive. The hopes of Trump continuing the close relationship with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi have faded, as the distance between the two men feels far greater that during Trump's first term.

On a geopolitical level, the US and India have been building strategic ties for many years, for example, vis a vis China, while maintaining a cooperative trade relationship.

Now, India continues to face a 50 per cent tariff from the US over its continued imports of Russian oil amid the war in Ukraine.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir met US President Donald Trump at the White House, in Washington **PHOTO: PTI**

India's long-term strategy

Closer US–Pakistan ties are now prompting doubts in Indian policy circles about the reliability of the US as a strategic partner.

Harsh Pant, head of the Strategic Studies Programme at Observer Research Foundation (ORF), a New Dehli think tank, told DW that the calculus of Indian foreign policy could change if Pakistan grows to become central to US strategy.

"If India doubts Washington's commitment as a long-term partner, it will fundamentally alter how India addresses challenges in the Indo-Pacific," said Pant, who is also a professor of international relations at King's College in London.

"This would not only reshape India's approach to the region but also impact America's broader Indo-Pacific strategy, the Quad partnership, and the many collaborative efforts between India and the US to balance rising Chinese influence," Pant added. The Quad is a joint forum of four Indo-Pacific powers: India, the US, Australia, and Japan, which Washington hopes will curb China's influence in the region.

Pak Plays The Field With Saudi Arabia

Further complicating the geopolitical picture is Pakistan's recent defence pact with Saudi Arabia, an important US ally in the Middle East. The pact includes a mutual defence clause, stating "any aggression against either country shall be considered an aggression against both."

For India, having its archrival aligned with a major Middle Eastern power is a strategic concern. However, Ajay Bisaria, a former Indian envoy to Pakistan, told DW that Indian policymakers are not yet alarmed.

"Given Pakistan's economic troubles, it is compelled to adapt its foreign policy to stay relevant to its three main international backers: the US, China, and Saudi Arabia. It tries to monetize its location by leveraging shifting geopolitical circumstances and pushing transactional relationships. India views Pakistan's actions as part of its ongoing effort to remain globally relevant, " Bisaria said.

Bisaria added that India's leadership is confident that time will eventually run out on the US and Pakistan's current rapprochement.

"India is alert to these manoeuvres but not overly concerned given the sustainability of Pakistan's balancing act and the inevitability of disappointment in US-Pakistan ties in the long run," he added.

DON's transactional nature

Meera Shankar, a former Indian ambassador to the US, told DW that Trump looks at both India and Pakistan through a transactional lens that is mainly focused on economic gain.

Both countries are "viewed through this prism of economic competition and not as a strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific. The Indian economy is not in competition with the US but, rather, is complementary, helping to build the competitiveness of American firms," said Shankar.

The diplomat warns that Pakistan has learned to exploit these US priorities by offering small, incremental favors to remain useful, but she also believes that the US-Pakistan relationship is ultimately unstable and unreliable for either side.

"US-Pakistan relations are now shaped by what concessions Pakistan can offer such as transactional counterterrorism cooperation or other deals and not by any enduring partnership or trust," she said.

The tides of US-Pakistan ties

Amitabh Mattoo, dean of Jawaharlal Nehru University's School of International Studies in New Delhi, said strong ties between Washington and Islamabad are a cyclical phenomenon.

"It has been a recurring feature of South Asian geopolitics since the Cold War. Each time the US has rediscovered Pakistan, it has done so for largely instrumental reasons," Mattoo told DW.

First it was the "Cold War against the Soviets, then the 'war on terror,' and now, arguably, the need for logistical access and tactical leverage in a turbulent West Asia–Central Asia arc," he added.

Mattoo said that Washington is now more aware than in the past of Pakistan's duplicity in counterterrorism and remains deeply invested in India as a strategic partner, especially in the Indo-Pacific. *—DW News*

Vietnam flood toll touches 19; 13 missing

HANOI, 30 SEPT

Torrential rains, the remnants of Typhoon Bualoi, have caused deadly flooding and landslides across Vietnam, with the death toll reaching 19 and 13 still missing, including eight fishermen. Authorities are continuing search and rescue operations as conditions worsen. Rainfall exceeded 30 centimetres in several regions within 24 hours, with the national weather agency warning of further downpours. The prolonged rain has isolated communities and blocked roads from the northern mountains to central Nghe An province. Swollen rivers, such as the Thao in Yen Bai, rose above emergency levels, forcing evacuations and flooding homes with water. Streets in Hanoi were also inundated, while residents near the Red River were urged to stay alert. *—PTI*

Colombia FM renounces US visa in protest

BAGOTA, 30 SEPT

Colombia's Foreign Minister, Rosa Villavicencio, has formally renounced her US visa in protest at Washington's decision to revoke President Gustavo Petro's travel permit. The move highlights escalating tensions between the two nations over drug policy, the Gaza conflict, and regional security. The US State Department cancelled Petro's visa after he joined a protest in New York, where he called for an international army to defend Palestinians and urged US soldiers to "disobey" orders. Villavicencio's ministry said Colombia rejected "diplomatic visas that limit opinions." Experts note it is highly unusual to renounce a non-immigrant visa, suggesting the act is a display of solidarity with Petro and a diplomatic challenge to Washington. *—PTI*

We do not support Rohingya extremists: B'desh

DHAKA, 30 SEPT

Bangladesh's Border Guard (BGB) has firmly rejected claims by Myanmar's United League of Arakan (ULA) that it supports Rohingya extremist groups such as ARSA and RSO. In a statement, the BGB dismissed the allegations as "misleading," stressing that it views the groups as security threats and has acted to dismantle their presence in Bangladesh. Several members, including a senior leader, have been arrested. The BGB said its mandate is to secure borders, uphold law and order, and manage over a million Rohingya refugees. Following Myanmar's ceasefire collapse, it has stepped up patrols. It accused the ULA of spreading propaganda to mask its own internal crises. *—ANI*

Prosecutors seek 11-year term for Diddy

NEW YORK, 30 SEPT

Prosecutors have urged a New York federal judge to sentence Sean "Diddy" Combs to more than 11 years in prison following his conviction on prostitution-related charges. In their submission, they cited an accuser who said she fears his release, describing the 55-year-old as "unrepentant." Combs was convicted in July of two counts of violating the Mann Act, after arranging paid sexual encounters between his girlfriends and male sex workers. Each count carries a maximum penalty of ten years. Prosecutors argued the court should prioritise the impact on victims, noting his conduct caused lasting harm. Defence lawyers, however, have requested no more than 14 months, claiming Combs has changed during detention. Sentencing is scheduled for this Friday. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Hamas says it's reviewing Trump's plan for Gaza

Leaders and Palestinian state laud the plan; Gazans wary

DOHA, 30 SEPT

Hamas said it was reviewing US President Donald Trump's 20-point peace plan for Gaza with group members and other Palestinian factions. Mediators in Qatar and Egypt shared the deal with Hamas.

The plan, unveiled after talks between Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, proposes an immediate end to the war in Gaza and release of all the hostages held by Hamas within 72 hours.

While the proposal offers an end to the fighting in the strip and guarantees flow of humanitarian aid and promises reconstruction, the Palestinian militant group will have to disarm, while Gaza, and its more than 2 million Palestinians, would be put under international control, for the foreseeable future. Reports suggest that former British Prime Minister Tony Blair would head the transitional government, with the deal making it clear that the neither Hamas nor the Palestinian Authority would be allowed to govern.

Some analysts indicated that Hamas would agree to the deal, while others called it an "ultimatum, rather than a deal".

Yet, global leaders as well as Palestine welcomed the deal.

"The State of Palestine welcomes the sincere and determined efforts of Trump to end the war on Gaza and affirms its confidence in his ability to find a path toward peace," the State of Palestine said. The Palestinian Authority also underscored the importance of the US in achieving peace in the region.

It said the peace plan would also "ensure the unification of Palestinian land and institutions in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, end the occupation, and open the path toward a just peace based on the two-state solution, with the independent and sovereign State of Palestine living side by side with the State of Israel."

Similarly, eight Arab and Muslim majority nations - Jordan, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt - welcomed the plan. Other notable voices calling Hamas to laud the plan included, China, the UN, Russia, India, France and the UK.

Meanwhile, Israel killed at least 27 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday, local hospitals said. Many Palestinians said the plan was imposing "Israel's peace" on them" *—Agencies*

We are firmly opposed to a Palestinian state. it is not written in the agreement either. Trump also said this; he said he understands our position.
-Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister
I think we are beyond very close... We're talking about much beyond Gaza. The whole deal, everything getting solved.... Peace in the Middle East
-Donald Trump, US President

President Donald Trump speaks during a news conference with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the State Dining Room of the White House on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Sharif, Munir were with us from the start: Trump on Gaza plan

Trump said Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir back his plan to end the Gaza conflict "100 per cent", as he listed them among the world leaders "very much involved" in the negotiations on the issue. "The Prime Minister and the Field Marshal of Pakistan, they were with us right from the beginning, incredible," he said. "They put out a statement that they fully believe in this pact. They said, 'Sir, you have a big notice from the PM and Field Marshal that they back this 100 per cent."

10 killed in blast near Baloch paramilitary HQ

QUETTA, 30 SEPT

- While no group has claimed responsibility for the blast, Baloch insurgent groups frequently carry out attacks targeting security personnel in the province.

A bomb attack targeting paramilitary forces in Balochistan province, Pakistan, has resulted in at least 10 fatalities and over 30 injuries. The explosion occurred on a busy street near the Frontier Constabulary (FC) headquarters in Quetta, the provincial capital.

Balochistan's Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar confirmed the casualties, stating, "Ten people have been killed while 32 were injured in the blast." The injured have been transported to various hospitals in the city, where an emergency has been declared.

Health Secretary Mujeebur Rehman noted that an emergency situation was activated across Quetta Civil Hospital, Balochistan Medical College (BMC) Hospital Quetta, and the Trauma Centre.

Television footage captured the moment of the explosion, which affected several civilians. Although no group has yet claimed responsibility, Baloch insurgent factions frequently target security personnel in the region.

Condemning the incident, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti labelled it a "terrorist attack," saying, "The terrorists cannot weaken the nation's resolve through cowardly acts. We remain committed to making Balochistan peaceful and secure." *—PTI*

Security officials examine damaged vehicles at the site of a powerful car bombing, in Quetta, Pakistan on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

The conflict allegedly erupted as a "peace rally" led by Muslim Conference leader Raja Saqib Majeed clashed with the demonstrators **PHOTO: X**

1 dead as protests over unfulfilled demands rock PoK

ISLAMABAD, 30 SEPT

Protests in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) turned violent, resulting in one fatality and multiple injuries, including that of a police officer, during a shutter-down and wheel-jam strike on Monday. The strike was orchestrated by the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JKJAAC) over unfulfilled demands, amidst a mobile and internet blackout that began on Sunday.

The conflict erupted near Neelum Bridge as a 'peace rally' led by Muslim Conference leader Raja Saqib Majeed clashed with JKJAAC protesters. Eyewitnesses reported that the peace rally participants allegedly fired on the demonstrators. A local shopkeeper succumbed to bullet wounds, and another was injured by the shrapnel.

According to JKJAAC, their protest—the culmination of a two-year struggle—demands an end to elite privileges, free education and health, and government accountability. With the businesses largely closed, hundreds gathered in Muzafarrabad's Lal Chowk, as JAC leaders urged further action, with plans for a reassembly on Tuesday. *—PTI*

Talks on healthcare fail, US nears shutdown

WASHINGTON, 30 SEPT

A partisan standoff over heath care and spending is threatening to trigger the first US government shutdown in almost seven years, with Democrats and Republicans in Congress unable to find agreement even as thousands of federal workers stand to be furloughed or permanently laid off.

The government will shut down at 12:01am Wednesday if the Senate does not pass a House measure that would extend federal funding for seven weeks while lawmakers finish their work on annual spending bills.

Senate Democrats say they won't vote for it unless Republicans include an extension of expiring health care benefits, among other demands, while President Donald Trump and Republicans are refusing to negotiate at all, arguing that it is a stripped down, "clean" bill that should be noncontroversial.

It was unclear, so far, if either side would blink before the deadline.

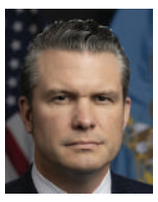
"It's now in the President's hands," Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said Monday after a meeting with Trump at the White House that yielded little apparent progress. "He can avoid the shutdown if he gets the Republican leaders to go along with what we want."

Vice President JD Vance, who was also in the meeting, said afterward, "I think we're headed into a shutdown, because the Democrats won't do the right thing." *—PTI*

US President Donald Trump shared a 'racist' deep-fake video of Democrat leaders - House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, who met with him on Monday to try and break the impasse **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

Use our cities for training: Don to 100 military officials

WASHINGTON, 30 SEPT



President Donald Trump and Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth addressed hundreds of US military officials Tuesday after the Pentagon suddenly asked top commanders from around the world to convene at a base in Virginia without publicly revealing the reason.

In his address, Trump said that America was facing a "war from within" and that he told Hegseth, "We should use some of these dangerous cities as training grounds for our military," a reference to his deployment of federal officers to cities he believes have high crime.

"Last month, I signed an executive order to provide training for a quick reaction force that can help quell civil disturbances," Trump said. "We have to handle it before it gets out of control. It won't get out of control once you're involved at all".

He added that he would fire generals he didn't like. Hegseth announced directives for troops that include "male-level" standards for physical fitness while slamming "fat generals". *—Salar*

H1B visas will change 'significantly' by 26 Feb: Lutnick

NEW YORK/ WASHINGTON, 30 SEPT

US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick said there will be "a significant number of changes" in the H1B visa process before February 2026, when the new fee of USD 1,00,000 goes into effect, as he described as "just wrong" the idea of "inexpensive" tech consultants coming into the country and bringing their families.

"This procedure and process goes into effect in February of 2026, so my guess is going to be, there are going to be a significant number of changes between now and 2026," Lutnick said Sunday in an interview with NewsNation.

Lutnick said that with the USD 100,000 fee on applications, "at least it shouldn't be overrun with these people. But I think you're going to see a real thoughtful change going forward."

Lutnick questioned why skilled workers were brought in through a lottery. "That just doesn't make any sense." *—PTI*

MOSTLY BOYS KILLED

3 dead, 65 trapped under rubble as Indonesian school collapses

SIDOARJO, 30 SEPT

At least three students were killed, more than 100 were injured and over 65 were presumed buried in the rubble as a school building collapsed in Indonesia. Rescuers ran oxygen and water to students trapped in the unstable concrete rubble Tuesday, a day after the structure fell.

Rescue workers, police and soldiers digging through the night pulled out eight weak and injured survivors more than eight hours after the collapse at Al Khoziny Islamic Boarding School in the East Java town of Sidoarjo. Rescuers saw additional bodies, indicating the death toll was likely to rise.

The students are mostly boys in grades seven to 11, between ages 12 and 18.

The students had been performing afternoon prayers in the Islamic boarding school building that was undergoing an unauthorised expansion when it suddenly collapsed on top of them, provincial police spokesperson Jules Abraham Abast said.

Female students were praying in another part of the building and managed to escape, survivors said.

Authorities were investigating the cause of the collapse. Abast said the old prayer hall was two stories but two more were being added without a permit.

"The old building's foundation was apparently unable to support two floors of concrete and collapsed during the pouring process," Abast said.*—PTI*

Rescuers search for survivors after a building collapsed at an Islamic boarding school, in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia **PHOTO: PTI**

Taliban enforces 1st full internet blackout in Afghan

ISLAMABAD, 30 SEPT

Afghanistan was hit by a near-total internet blackout on Monday, with connectivity reportedly dropping to just 14 per cent of normal levels. Local media suggested the disruption was linked to a nationwide cut in fibre-optic services, imposed as part of a Taliban morality crackdown.

It is the first nationwide shutdown since the Taliban seized power in August, 2021. The blackout followed a decree by Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada banning fibre-optic connections, claiming the service encouraged "immorality."

Internet advocacy group Netblocks confirmed a "collapse" in connectivity, warning that the disruption would severely limit Afghans' ability to contact the outside world. The UN mission urged the Taliban to restore connectivity. *—PTI*

The UN reported at least 22 deaths during the protests, which began on last Thursday **PHOTO: X**

Madagascar Prez fires govt over deadly Gen Z protests

ANTANANARIVO, 30 SEPT

Madagascar President Andry Rajoelina dismissed Prime Minister Christian Ntsay and his entire government following days of fierce protests led by Gen Z over electricity and water supply failures. In a national address, Rajoelina stated, "Your demands have been heard, and I apologise if there are members of the government who have not done the work that the people expected," while announcing a three-day window for applications for new government positions.

The protests, which began last Thursday, have resulted in 22 fatalities and over 100 injuries, as reported by the United Nations, which condemned the "violent response" from security forces. Rajoelina expressed sympathy for the bereaved but did not confirm the UN's death toll.

Despite demands for his resignation, Rajoelina offered no indication he would step down, as crowds returned to the streets, prompting security forces to use tear gas on Tuesday. Demonstrators expressed frustration over escalating poverty. *—PTI*

Mkts tumble for 8th day amid fall in outflows

Sensex declines 97.32 pts, while Nifty falls 23.80 pts

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower on Tuesday after a volatile session, marking the eighth consecutive session of southward movement due to relentless foreign fund outflows and caution ahead of the RBI's interest rate decision.

Giving up early gains, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 97.32 points or 0.12 per cent to settle at 80,267.62. In eight trading days, the Sensex has tanked 2,746.34 points or 3.30 per cent.

The 50-share NSE Nifty fell by 23.80 points or 0.10 per cent to 24,611.10.

Trading remained subdued on the monthly expiry day and markets moved in a narrow range. Metal, auto and banking stocks, particularly PSU banks, advanced while realty and consumer durables shares faced selling pressure.

Caution prevailed in the market ahead of the RBI's interest rate decision on Wednesday, analysts said.

Market participants are keenly awaiting the RBI's commentary for insights into future interest rate trajectories, although a status quo on rates is widely expected, Nair added.

However, UltraTech Cement, Adani Ports, Tata Motors, Bharat Electronics, Bajaj Finance and Hindustan Unilever were among the major gainer.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,831.59 crore on Monday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth Rs 3,845.87 crore, according to exchange data.

Additionally, crude oil prices pared early gains to trade lower at Rs 5,576 per barrel in the domestic futures trade on Tuesday, tracking weak global cues amid indications of higher output from OPEC+ nations and resumption of exports from Iraq's Kurdistan region. —*PTI*

Jindal Power gets CCI nod to acquire Jaiprakash Associates

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Fair trade regulator CCI on Tuesday said it has given in-principle approval to Naveen Jindal-led Jindal Power's proposal to acquire debt-ridden Jaiprakash Associates, should it win a bid in the ongoing insolvency proceeding.

Apart from Jindal Power, the proposals of PNC Infratech, Adani Group and Dalmia Bharat for JAL acquisition have been cleared by the regulator.

"Commission approves acquisition of Jaiprakash Associates Limited by Jindal Power Ltd," the regulator said in a post on X.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) said it has approved the acquisition of Jaiprakash Associates Ltd (JAL) by Jindal Power.

Following a recent ruling by the Supreme Court related to interpreting provisions of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), an approval from the competition watchdog is mandatory for submission of a resolution plan by the entity concerned.

The entity must obtain the CCI nod before the resolution plan is voted upon by the Committee of Creditors (CoC) of the company undergoing the resolution process under the IBC.

The CoC of Jaiprakash Associates Ltd is still reviewing the resolution plans received, and the voting will be conducted in due course.

JAL was admitted into the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) through the National Company Law Tribunal, Allahabad Bench, order dated June 3, 2024.

Creditors claims a staggering Rs 57,185 crore. —*PTI*

Govt appoints new MDs for Union Bank, Central Bank

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The government has appointed Asheesh Pandey as Managing Director (MD) and CEO of Union Bank of India and Kalyan Kumar as MD and CEO of Central Bank of India for three years, sources said. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister, approved the appointments. Pandey, currently Executive Director at Bank of Maharashtra, will assume charge at Union Bank of India immediately. Kumar, Executive Director of Punjab National Bank, will succeed M V Rao at the Central Bank of India after his superannuation in July. Both appointments were recommended by the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) on 30 May. FSIB, chaired by former DoPT Secretary Bhanu Pratap Sharma, includes Animesh Chauhan, Deepak Singhal, and Shailendra Bhandari among its members. —*PTI*

Navi Mumbai airport gets aerodrome licence

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has granted an aerodrome licence to Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA), making it the second airport in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. In a statement on Tuesday, operator Navi Mumbai International Airport Ltd (NMIAL) said the licence, issued after meeting stringent safety and regulatory standards, is a key requirement for commencing operations. Developed by the Adani Group and Maharashtra's Cidco in five phases, the airport's launch phase is designed to handle 20 million passengers annually and 0.5 million metric tons of cargo. With regulatory approval secured, NMIA is closer to enhancing regional and international connectivity. The airport is expected to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in early October. —*PTI*

WeWork reports Rs 14.14 cr loss, revenue rises 19%

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Co-working giant WeWork India has announced a loss of Rs 14.14 crore for the April-June quarter, despite a 19 per cent increase in revenue to Rs 535.31 crore, driven by strong demand for office space. This is an improvement from a loss of Rs 29.17 crore in the same period last year, as outlined in its latest Red Herring Prospectus (RHP) filed with SEBI. For the entire fiscal year 2024-25, the company reported a profit of Rs 128.18 crore on a turnover of Rs 1,949.21 crore. Founded in 2017, WeWork India operates under an exclusive licence from WeWork Global, with Bengaluru-based Embassy Group owning around 76.21 per cent of the company. —*PTI*

40% of Indian doctors now using AI at work

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Over 40 per cent of clinicians in India are now using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for work, up from just 12 per cent last year, according to Elsevier's Clinician of the Future 2025 report. The sharp rise places India ahead of the US (36 per cent) and UK (34 per cent), though still behind China (71 per cent). Indian clinicians show strong optimism, with 52 per cent expecting most patients will soon self-diagnose using AI. However, the report highlights institutional shortcomings, including limited AI training and weak governance frameworks. Experts caution that these gaps must be addressed urgently, particularly as two-thirds of Indian clinicians report growing burnout from heavier patient loads. The study urges government and industry to strengthen training, build trust, and close digital literacy gaps. —*PTI*

4 PAISE DOWN

Rupee falls to fresh low of 88.79 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

The rupee fell 4 paise to an all-time low of 88.79 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, pressured by sustained foreign capital outflows amid global trade uncertainties.

However, a steep fall in global crude oil prices, along with a weaker greenback, prevented a sharp decline in the local unit, according to forex traders.

The markets are also awaiting the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) Monetary Policy Committee decision, which will be announced on Wednesday.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 88.73 against the dollar and traded in the range of 88.69-88.80 before settling at 88.79 (provisional), lower by 4 paise against its previous close.

The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled lower by 3 paise at 88.75 against the greenback on Monday.

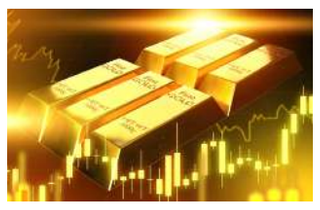
"Constant pressure from FPIs buying dollars brought down the rupee, where the RBI seems to be present, supplying dollars. The rupee has remained vulnerable to the FPIs selling due to the trade trauma seen since August, when US President Donald Trump applied 50 per cent tariffs on Indian Exports," Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP, said.

PHOTO: PTI

The range for Wednesday is expected between 88.50 and 89.00, he said.

The RBI meeting is taking place against the backdrop of ongoing geopolitical tensions and the US imposing 50 per cent tariffs on Indian shipments.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 97.79, lower by 0.11 per cent. —*PTI*



Gold touches record high of Rs 1.2L/10g

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Gold prices on Tuesday climbed Rs 500 to touch record Rs 1.20 lakh per 10g in the national capital due to a weak dollar and expectations of further rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the yellow metal had rallied Rs 1,500 to close at Rs 1,19,500 per 10g on Monday.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity extended the gains for the fourth straight session by rising Rs 500 to hit a record high of Rs 1,19,400 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes) in the local bullion market.

"Gold prices surged as investors turned jittery amid looming prospects of a US government shutdown after talks between Trump and congressional leaders ended without agreement on short-term funding. This unsettled investors as it could delay the release of the official jobs report and complicate the Federal Reserve's policy trajectory," said Kaynat Chainwala, AVP Commodity Research, Kotak Securities.

In addition, silver prices rose by Rs 500 to hit a new peak of Rs 1,50,500 per kg (inclusive of all taxes). —*PTI*

CLOSELY MONITORING

Govt targets e-commerce sites for GST compliance benefits

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The government is scrutinising e-commerce platforms to ensure that reductions in Goods and Services Tax (GST) are being effectively passed on to consumers, particularly for essential FMCG products such as shampoo and pulses.

A source indicated that authorities are closely monitoring compliance with pricing norms to prevent any withholding of intended consumer benefits from these tax reductions.

In response to complaints regarding insufficient price reductions on daily essentials sold via some e-commerce platforms, sources revealed that the government has informally reprimanded certain operators for their pricing practices. "

E-commerce platforms have cited 'technical glitches' when discrepancies in pricing before and after the GST reduction were raised, but the government remains vigilant.

As of 22 September, GST has been streamlined into a two-tier structure of 5 per cent and 18 per cent. This change has resulted in price reductions for 99 per cent of daily used items.

While the anti-profiteering mechanism has yet to be activated for related complaints, government continues to oversee price movements. —*PTI*

RBI allows banks to offer capital loans against gold

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced that banks can now provide need-based working capital loans to manufacturers using gold as a raw material, a provision previously exclusive to jewellers. Typically, banks are prohibited from lending for gold or silver purchases, or against primary gold/silver security. However, the RBI has amended its guidelines to allow scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) and certain urban cooperative banks (UCBs) to extend working capital loans to businesses utilising gold or silver in manufacturing processes.

In a further move to benefit borrowers, the RBI has amended interest rate policies, allowing banks to adjust certain spread components more frequently than previously mandated. These changes will take effect from 1 October 2025, enhancing the flexibility of financial provisions for various sectors. —*PTI*

Tata Motors to demerge from 1 October

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

Tata Motors Ltd, the passenger and commercial vehicle maker, announced at its analyst meet that the record date for the demerger of its Commercial Vehicles (CV) business will be fixed in mid-October, with the listing expected in November.

The demerger, approved in August last year, has already received clearance from the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and takes effect from Wednesday, 1 October, subject to the Registrar of Companies' (RoC) approval.

Under the scheme, shareholders will receive one share of the new CV entity for every Tata Motors share held.

Post-demerger, the existing listed shares will trade ex-CV a day after the record date and will be renamed Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd. (TMPVL).

The CV business will subsequently be listed as Tata Motors Ltd. (TML). —*Agencies*

Govt extends benefits to exporters till March 2026

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The Indian government has extended the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme until 31 March, 2026, offering continued relief to exporters. The scheme, which refunds taxes and duties not reimbursed through other mechanisms, was due to expire on 30 September, 2025. In its notification, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) confirmed that existing refund rates will remain applicable. Crucially, the extension now covers exporters under Advance Authorisation, Export Oriented Units, and Special Economic Zones. —*PTI*

India secures $100B investment in EFTA deal

BENGALURU, 30 OCT

The free trade agreement between India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) will come into effect on 1 October, marking a significant economic milestone.

Under the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA), India has secured a landmark investment commitment of USD 100 billion over 15 years from Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein – the first such pledge in any Indian trade deal. The investment is expected to create one million jobs.

In return, India will gradually phase out customs duties on 82.7 per cent of its tariff lines, covering 95.3 per cent of EFTA exports, including Swiss watches, chocolates, biscuits and polished diamonds. Sensitive sectors such as dairy, coal, and certain agricultural goods are excluded.

India has also offered access in 105 service sub-sectors while gaining commitments in 128 from Switzerland, 114 from Norway, 107 from Liechtenstein and 110 from Iceland. Experts highlight synergies in Swiss pharmaceuticals, precision machinery, Norway's green maritime technologies and Iceland's renewable energy expertise. —*PTI*

YOUTUBE TO PAY $24.5M TO SETTLE TRUMP'S ACCOUNT SUSPENSION LAWSUIT

SAN FRANCISCO, 30 SEPT

Google's YouTube has agreed to pay $24.5 million to settle a lawsuit by President Donald Trump over his 2021 account suspension following the 6 January, 2021 attack on the US Capitol.

According to documents filed in federal court in California, $22 million of the settlement will be contributed to the Trust for the National Mall and the rest will go to other plaintiffs, including the American Conservative Union.

Google is the latest big tech company to settle lawsuits brought by Trump. In January, Meta Platforms agreed to pay $25 million to settle a lawsuit over his 2021 suspension from Facebook. Elon Musk's X agreed to settle a similar lawsuit brought against the company then known as Twitter for $10 million.

The settlement does not constitute an admission of liability, the filing says. Google confirmed the settlement but declined to comment beyond it.

The disclosure of the settlement came a week before a scheduled 6 October court hearing to discuss the case with US District Judge Yvonne Gonzalez-Rogers in Oakland, California. —*PTI*

FIRM SAYS ONLY 12K FIRED

TCS workers anxious over 80K layoff rumours

MUMBAI, 30 SEPT

Two months after Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) Chief K Krithivasan announced plans to trim 2 percent of the company's workforce, the effects are now being felt on the ground, said sources.

A rise in sudden and forced resignations in recent weeks has left employees with panic, uncertainty, and growing anxiety across the ranks, it said.

According to sources, the employees, stakeholders and IT unions there will be more people fired than the actual number mentioned by the company.

An employee who is a part of IT unions told Moneycontrol, "Approximately 10,000 impacted employees had directly approached us since June. The layoffs could easily go over 30,000. Since employees are asked to resign themselves and are not being terminated by the company, these numbers won't show up in TCS' records -- may be only in their attrition figures."

For the past two months, a major number of IT unions held campagins, protesting against the firm's decision, said sources.

However, a source close to the company dismissed these claims, arguing that the large layoff cited by unions are just a means of gaining attention, as company will not be able to withstand the consequences of such massive level of layoffs.

The company's spokesperson also dismissed the claims made by the union, reaffirming that only 2 per cent of workforce will be impacted, said sources.

According to sources, the impacted employees have allegedly revealed about a list the managers have called 'fluidity list'l, which has the names of employees who would be fired. The names in the alleged list has no connection to their skills or years of experience, instead are either decided by the account manages or on whim, it added. —*Agencies*

India launches anti-dumping probe on Chinese imports

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

India's Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) has launched anti-dumping investigations into imports of solar cell components and mobile phone covers from China.

The probe into "Solar Encapsulants, excluding EVA Encapsulants," used in solar PV modules, follows a complaint alleging that dumped Chinese imports are materially harming domestic makers. A separate investigation will assess mobile phone covers, also accused of being imported at unfairly low prices.

DGTR stated that, if confirmed, duties may be recommended to offset the injury and restore fair competition. The Finance Ministry will take the final decision. Anti-dumping measures, permitted under World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules, are aimed at ensuring a level playing field for domestic industry.

In parallel, DGTR has initiated an anti-subsidy investigation into imports of Clear Float Glass from Malaysia and Indonesia, based on evidence of countervailable subsidies causing material injury to Indian glass producers. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

World Para Athletics C'ship: Kathuniya wins a silver

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

India's Yogesh Kathuniya won yet another silver medal in the men's F56 discus throw event at the World Para Athletics Championships here on Tuesday, as his quest for a maiden gold at the global level continued. The 28-year-old Kathuniya sent the disc to 42.49m in his second attempt to win the silver. He has been winning a medal in all four world championships since 2019. He picked up his third successive silver in the World Championships the other two being in the 2023 and 2024 editions in addition to the two silver medals in the Paralympic Games (2021 and 2024). He had also won a bronze in the 2019 edition.—*PTI*

Maxwell ruled out of NZ tour with wrist fracture

MELBOURNE, 30 SEPT

Australia's star all-rounder Glenn Maxwell was on Tuesday ruled out of the three-match T20 series against New Zealand with a fractured wrist after being hit by a Mitchell Owen straight drive while bowling in the nets in Mount Maunganui. Sydney Sixers and New South Wales wicketkeeper-batter Josh Philippe has been called up as Maxwell's replacement for the series being played from Wednesday at Mount Maunganui's Bay Oval. This is a setback for Australia, who have also lost Josh Inglis to a calf injury in the build-up to the series, leading to the selection of Alex Carey. The 36-year-old Maxwell, who scored an unbeaten half-century to guide Australia to a T20 series win over South Africa last month, was struck on the right wrist while bowling in the nets.—*PTI*

5 players released from national football team camp

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Indian men's football team head coach Khalid Jamil on Tuesday released five players, including Jithin MS and Manvir Singh (Jr.), from the preparatory camp in the lead up to the AFC Asian Cup qualifier matches against Singapore. "Defender Asheer Akhtar, forwards Jithin and Manvir Singh (Jr.), Mohammed Aimen, who plays on the wing, and midfielder Vibin Mohanan have been released from the camp," the All India Football Federation (AIFF) said on its social media handle. This comes a day after talismanic striker Sunil Chhetri and his two Bengaluru FC teammates Rahul Bheke and Roshan Singh Naorem joined the preparatory camp in Bengaluru.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Rishab Nehra takes men's javelin crown

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Rishab Nehra sprung a surprise to record his personal best of 80.12m and claim the men's javelin crown in a competitive field on the concluding day of the National Open Athletics Championships at the Birsa Munda Stadium, Morabadi, on Tuesday. The 25-year-old Nehra, who had a previous best of 77.38m in 2022 and a season best of 72.29m, began with 72.26m and 76.19m in his first two attempts before hurling the spear high and far to join the elite 80m club. It helped him go past leader Shivam Lohakare's 76.58m and corner glory. "The feel was good in the first two throws, so my coach asked me to push in the third.—*PTI*

AC trophy fiasco: BCCI raises strong objection

India was not awarded the trophy on Sunday

DUBAI, 30 SEPT

The BCCI on Tuesday raised "strong objection" in the Asian Cricket Council's AGM over India not being presented the winner's trophy of the Asia Cup, but the body's chairman Mohsin Naqvi remained defiant by "still not agreeing" to it.

India was not awarded the trophy on Sunday after their refusal to take the silverware from Naqvi, who is also a minister in the Pakistan government and chairman of the country's cricket board. He also has a pronounced anti-India political position.

Tilak Varma, member of the Asia Cup 2025-winning Indian cricket team, addresses a press conference in Hyderabad on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

BCCI vice President Rajeev Shukla and former treasurer Ashish Shelar were the Board representatives in the AGM here.

Winning the Asia Cup was the "best reply" to an aggressive opposition, middle-order batter Tilak Varma said on Tuesday, revealing that he aced an initial bout of pressure and verbal volleys by Pakistan players en route to his match-winning half-century in the title clash.

AC victory best reply to Pakistan's sledging: Tilak

Tilak made an unbeaten 69 to guide India to a five-wicket win over their arch-rivals at Dubai last Sunday."There was some pressure and nerves initially. But I have placed my country ahead of everything else, and I wanted to win the match for the country.

I knew if I succumbed to the pressure at that time, I would be letting down myself and 140 crore people of the country," Tilak said after he arrived from Dubai last night."I believed in the basics that I learned as a young cricketer from my coaches and executed them. The best reply to them was to win the match, and that's what we did," he added.Tilak admitted that the Pakistan players resorted to some intense sledging during the match, but he preferred to maintain silence while the chase of 147 was on."After Operation Sindoor, they came hard on us. We have replied in a good way to them by playing sports the way they should be played. We lost three wickets quickly, and things got a bit heated then. —*PTI*

Nepal shocks West Indies by 90 runs

Nepal shocked the West Indies by a record 90 runs and won their Twenty20 series with a match to spare. Nepal played the two-time world champion for the first time on Saturday and earned a historic win by 19 runs and its first victory over an ICC full member. Tuesday's result was even more impressive. Nepal made 173-6 with career-best 60s from Aasif Sheikh and Sundeep Jora, then West Indies were bowled out for 83 in 17.1 overs. Medium-pacer Mohammad Aadil Alam took a career-best 4-24 in his ninth T20. A second-string West Indies debuted a fifth player in the series, 19-year-old leg-spinner Zishan Motara, and plunged to a new low.In July, the test team was all out for 27 against Australia in Kingston, the second-lowest total in men's test history. —*PTI*

JAPAN OPEN 2025

Carlos Alcaraz outclasses Taylor Fritz to win title

BEIJING, 30 SEPT

World number one Carlos Alcaraz wore down Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-4 in the Japan Open final on Tuesday to win his eighth title of a spectacular year and further cement his status as a dominant force in the men's game.

Victory also earned Alcaraz revenge for a stunning loss to Fritz at the Laver Cup in San Francisco this month, the Spaniard's first defeat by the American in four clashes, which came shortly after his triumphant US Open campaign. After a high-quality beginning to the match under the roof of the Ariake Colosseum, Alcaraz edged ahead when Fritz sent his shot long to drop serve for the first time, and the top seed was in no mood to relent as he went on to seal the opening set.

The six-time Grand Slam champion quickly built a 4-1 lead, prompting Fritz to throw his racket to the floor in frustration, and although Alcaraz briefly wobbled on serve later, he secured the win for his first Tokyo title.

Carlos Alcaraz with trophy PHOTO: X/@CO

Key service break to open the 3rd set leads Coco Gauff

Coco Gauff broke Belinda Bencic's serve to open the deciding set and went on to beat the Swiss player 4-6, 7-6 (4), 6-2 on Tuesday to advance to the China Open quarterfinals.

The second-seeded Gauff improved her head-to-head career meetings with the 28-year-old Bencic to 4-2.

Three of those matches have come this year, including Gauff's win at the Australian Open in January. But Bencic won at Abu Dhabi, and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics gold medalist made the Indian Wells quarterfinals and advanced to the Wimbledon semis. —*PTI*

Former Indian Women's captains were felicitated ahead of the Women's World Cup match between India and Sri Lanka in Guwahati PHOTO: PTI

ISSF JUNIOR WORLD CUP

India clinch air rifle mixed team gold

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Isha Anil Taksale and Himanshu staged a thrilling fightback to win the 10m air rifle mixed team gold against country-mates Shambhavi Kshirsagar and Naraen Pranav, while Vinay Pratap Chandrawat bagged a bronze in men's trap as India maintained its No. 1 spot in the ISSF Junior World Cup with 23 medals, here on Tuesday.

On the penultimate day of the event, when India took its tally to seven gold, nine silver, and seven bronze, the pair of Isha and Himanshu defeated Shambhavi and Pranav 17-15 after trailing 9-15 at one stage.

Isha Anil Taksale and Himanshu won the gold medal, while Shambhavi Shravan Kshrisagar and Naraen Pranav Vanitha took bronze PHOTO: PTI

Both pairs showcased high-quality shooting with Shambhavi hitting two perfect 10.9s and Isha adding one, while only five of the 64 shots fired in the gold-medal match dipped below 10. The bronze medal went to Individual Neutral Athletes (AIN) Varvara Kardakova and Kamil Nuriakhmetov. —*PTI*

Australia eye a strong start against New Zealand

INDORE, 30 SEPT

Seven-time champions Australia will be eager to launch their title defence with a statement effort against a strong and experienced New Zealand in the ICC Women's World Cup here on Wednesday.

While the reigning T20 world champions, the Kiwis, are capable of offering them a tough fight, Australia has a far bigger internal challenge to tide over.

They have an abundance of talent and options in their ranks, and balancing them with the team requirements is a headache, though a pleasant one. Left-arm spinner Sophie Molineux and leg-spinner Georgia Wareham have recovered from their respective injuries, and now the Aussies will have to think about how to accommodate these proven performers in the eleven.

The Australian think-tank will ponder whether to go with two leg-spinners in Wareham and Alana King or add Molineux to give more variety to their attack.

Their pace department too is enviously rich with talent, with the likes of Megan Schutt, Annabel Sutherland, Ellyse Perry, Tahlia McGrath, and Darcie Brown lining up for a place in the eleven.

PHOTO: PTI

Australia vs New Zealand Match starts at 3.00 pm IST

They have a plethora of match-winners in batting too, Beth Mooney, Phoebe Litchfield, and Ashleigh Gardner, but skipper Alyssa Healy will have to lead from the front. The addition of Georgia Voll, who recently made an 87-ball 101 against India at Brisbane, has further bolstered their batting.

Besides, the Aussies displayed their readiness for the marquee event, beating hosts India 2-1 in a bilateral ODI series recently. —*PTI*

FENESTA OPEN: DIVYA, AKANKSHA ADVANCE TO 2ND ROUND

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

Qualifier Divya Bhardwaj stunned third seed Pooja Ingale while Akanksha Nitture recorded a fluent win to progress to the women's singles second round of the Fenesta Open National Tennis Championship, here on Tuesday.

Divya shocked Maharashtra's Pooja Ingale 6-3, 6-4 on a rain-affected day.The match began on an enthralling note, with the scores tied at 3-3 midway through the set before Divya reeled off three consecutive games to seize control.

The second set mirrored the first, with the scores level at 3-3 midway before Divya broke Pooja's serve to take a 5-3 lead.The third seed then held her serve with a sublime display around the net, but could not stop Divya from clinching her sixth game. —*PTI*

Srihari wins his 5th medal

AHMEDABAD, 30 SEPT

Star Indian swimmer Srihari Nataraj once again stood tall, bagging a bronze in the 100m freestyle to extend his personal haul to five medals at the 11th Asian Aquatics Championships here on Tuesday.

Also making his mark was Rohit B Benedicton, who claimed a silver in the men's 50m butterfly, taking India's overall medal tally to nine.

Drawn in lane five, Srihari paced his race smartly. He turned third at the 50m mark with China's Haoyu Wang (49.19) and Qatar's Ali Tamer Hassan (49.46) ahead, while Akash Mani(50.45) was close on his heels in fourth.

PHOTO: SFI

In the second lap, Srihari dug in, maintaining his rhythm to hold off the chasing pack and secure bronze in 49.96 seconds.

"I've had a good season this year, and I think training has been going really well. —*PTI*

Real Madrid travels 4,000 miles for a CL match

ALMATY, 30 SEPT

Real Madrid takes a long, unprecedented trip to Kazakhstan to face Kairat Almaty in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Kazakhstan joined UEFA in 2002, having previously competed in the Asian Football Confederation. The western part of Kazakhstan is geographically part of Europe, but Madrid – the record 15-time European champion is traveling to the country's capital in the east, nearly 4,000 miles (6,500 kilometers) from the Spanish capital.

"You have to adapt, it's not a question of whether the trip bothers you or not," Madrid coach Xabi Alonso said. "It's just another game, and the trip is neither an impediment nor an excuse." Madrid, which defeated Marseille 2-1 in its opening game, will hope to bounce back from a chastening 5-2 loss at city rival Atlético Madrid in La Liga on Saturday the team's first defeat of the season. Kairat lost its tournament debut at Sporting Lisbon 4-1, but has a strong European record at home with just four defeats from its last 30 matches in Almaty.Bayern Munich visits Pafos in Cyprus for another match against a tournament newcomer. Atlético is also playing, with Eintracht Frankfurt visiting after nearly throwing away a six-goal lead on Saturday. —*PTI*

PREMIER LEAGUE

Jarrod Bowen strikes late to rescue 1-1 draw

LONDON, 30 SEPT

West Ham United battled back from a goal down to draw 1-1 away to Everton in the Premier League on Monday night, with Jarrod Bowen scoring as Nuno Espirito Santo grabbed a point in his first game in charge of the London side.

With former manager Graham Potter sacked on Saturday, the Portuguese coach had little time to work with his new squad, but he quickly stamped his authority by dropping midfielder James Ward-Prowse, a player whose loan agreement he terminated early at Nottingham Forest last season. However, the London side's problems at set pieces persisted as they conceded a headed goal from Michael Keane in the 18th minute after a cleared corner was crossed back into the box.

Everton almost went two up early in the second half, but forward Beto couldn't get a clean strike on the ball, and Jake O'Brien's follow-up shot was blocked behind for a corner. They went on to dominate the first 20 minutes of the second half but couldn't get the ball in the net, and they were punished for their wasteful finishing when Bowen picked up a headed clearance and cut inside before firing home in the 65th minute.

Jarrod Bowen PHOTO: X/@PL

It was the first goal scored in a competitive game by the away side at their new Hill Dickinson stadium, and their confidence quickly crumbled as the visitors took over.

Bowen had another effort steered behind for a corner in the 72nd minute, but West Ham breathed a sigh of relief ten minutes later when Konstantinos Mavropanos was penalised for pulling Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall's shirt, with the referee turning down Everton's pleas for a penalty and awarding a free kick instead.

West Ham continued to pour forward seeking a second, but despite the positive display, they had to be content with a point that leaves them in 19th place. —*PTI*

Sports Ministry invites applications for Sports Awards

NEW DELHI, 30 SEPT

The Sports Ministry on Tuesday began the process of inviting applications for this year's national sports awards, with October 28 being the last date of submission.

The awards are given annually by the President of India to recognise and reward excellence in sports, but the date of the ceremony, which is held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, is not yet out.

Once again, sportspersons penalised for doping violations would only be eligible if their ban period is over.

"The achievements during the said suspension/ punishment would not be considered. However, a sportsperson against whom an enquiry is pending/ongoing will not be considered," the ministry stated in the notified eligibility criteria.

PHOTO: PTI

A Screening Committee consisting of the Joint Secretary (Sports), Secretary, Sports Authority of India (SAI), Director (Sports)/Deputy Secretary (Sports) Department of Sports, and Executive Director (TEAMS)/Director (TEAMS), SAI will scrutinise the applications. —*PTI*